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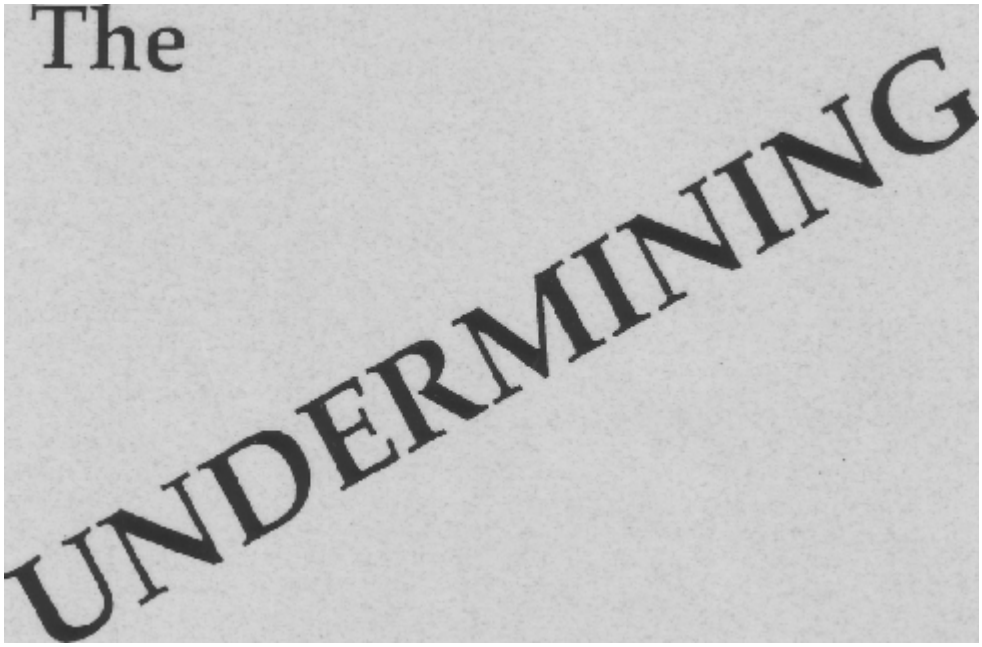
**MARY BALL MARTÍNEZ**




# of the CATHOLIC CHURCH

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MARY BALL MARTÍNEZ

# The UNDERMINING of the CATHOLIC CHURCH

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By the same author:
***FROM ROME URGENTLY***

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*To the Traditionalists,*
*those Roman Catholics*
*scattered over the world*
*who are resisting every effort*
*to take from them*
*the Faith of their fathers*

# I

# METAMORPHOSIS

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In Rome the hours before dawn are never really warm, even in summer. It was the vigil of Pentecost and virtually summer (the great movable feasts came late in the year 1971) when some four thousand men and women from many parts of the world knelt through the night on chill flagstones below the steps of St. Peter's Basilica. In the immense circle of the piazza, only dimly lit by an uncertain moon and a few electric bulbs hidden high among the all-embracing Bernini columns, they would have looked from above, even in such numbers, like small huddled shadows.

Ahead, as if it were the object of their prayers, the great facade, secure atop its thirty-eight steps, immutable now for four hundred years, its magnificent stones successors to lesser stones, said to cover the bones of the Galilean fisherman, Simon called Peter. Here was the core of Christendom, the Rock and the tangible sign of Christian permanence. For the kneeling pilgrims the darkness itself added dimension and wonder to the wall the Basilica made, a wall to hold back not just the dawn that would soon come out of the East, but a wall to hold back all the false doctrines on earth. Hardly a handful among the crowd would have known that already behind the brave facade a hollowing-out process, an eating away of strength and substance, had been going on for more than half a century, that the Catholic Church had been undermined.

All of them knew that something was wrong; otherwise they would not have joined the pilgrimage. In France, in Germany, England, Argentina, the United States, Australia, each in his own parish, had been stricken by sudden change, by orders to worship in a strange new way. Nearly half of the pilgrims were French, having arrived on chartered trains from Paris and all had come to plead with the Holy Father to give them back the Mass, the Sacraments and a Catechism for their children.

Had any of them looked beyond the pillars and high over to the right, they could have made out the shuttered windows of the papal apartments. Was the Pope asleep? Could he sleep, knowing they were there? From where he lay, the murmured *Aves* and *Paters* of the fifteen decades of the rosary cannot have sounded much louder than the play of water on the ancient fountain in the piazza.

In Latin a French priest led one decade, a lawyer from Canada the second, a farmer from Bavaria the third. At midnight everyone rose to make "the way of the Cross". Holding lighted candles, they cast long shadows as they moved in slow procession between the enormous columns. With no painting to remind them of the suffering of Christ they listened as a young man from one, then another, of the main language groups, read a description of each "station".

When the air grew more chilly, kettles of hot coffee were provided. Someone carried cups to the *carabinieri* sitting in their Fiat at a discreet distance. It was noted that the shutters behind which Paul VI slept, or did not sleep, remained tightly shut.

Months later it became known that the bishop who would give resounding voice to the entreaty of these pilgrims, had slept soundly through that June night in a modest convent cell somewhere in the labyrinth of medieval streets on the

other side of the Tiber. In the summer of 1971 Msgr. Marcel Lefebvre, missionary bishop to French Africa, already dissident clerically, was not ready to declare himself publicly.

There was no such hesitancy on the part of Pope Paul VI. His adamant refusal to receive the "traditionalist" pilgrims, while making himself available as usual that week in a series of private audiences, was a declaration no one could mistake.

It had been five or six years earlier that the seven hundred million or so Roman Catholics scattered over the world had experienced the first shock of change. On a certain Sunday in the late 1960's (the date varied from country to country) they had gone to church to find that altar, liturgy, language and ritual had undergone total metamorphosis. Rumors had been reaching them, and virtually every Catholic from Long Island parishioners to worshippers in grass-roofed chapels in the Congo, knew that high-level meetings were going on in Rome. However, none of the information they had picked up from hearsay or even anything they had seen in print, had prepared them for what they found in church that Sunday morning.

In the months that followed, bewilderment would fade into resignation, very occasionally into satisfaction. Now and then, however, there was a sharp outcry, as when the Italian novelist, Tito Casini, denounced his bishop, Cardinal Lercaro of Bologna, who happened also to head the Pontifical Commission for the Liturgy: "You have done what Roman soldiers at the foot of the Cross never dared to do. You have torn the seamless tunic, the bond of unity among believers in Christ, past, present and future, to leave it in shreds." The Casini open-letter went around the world in a dozen translations.

In Germany, historian Reinhardt Raffalt was writing: "Those of other faiths are looking on in horror as the Catholic Church casts away those ancient rites that have clothed the mysteries of Christianity in timeless beauty."

From England came a passionate, nearly resentful, plea to Pope Paul to "bring back the Mass as it was so magnificently expressed in Latin, the Mass that inspired innumerable works of mysticism, of art, poetry, sculpture and music, the Mass that belongs, not only to the Catholic Church and its faithful, but to the culture of the entire world." The petition was signed by several score London-based writers, artists, philosophers and musicians, including Yehudi Menuhin, Agatha Christie, Andres Segovia, Robert Graves, Jorge Luis Borges, Robert Lowell, Iris Murdoch, Vladimir Askanazy.

Among the faithful dissent began, expectedly, in the intellectual circles of France. Jean Madiran, publishing an effective little review, *Itineraires,* was already picking up deviation from orthodoxy during the early Council sessions. Writing in Madiran's paper, the political economist, Louis Salleron asked if the Church was turning Arian, a reference to the great wave of heresy of the fourth century. He had noticed a persistent downgrading of Christ implicit in the just-published French translation of the Council's version of the Creed. Whereupon the philosophers, Etienne Gilson and Gustav Thibon, joined novelist François Mauriac to take up the question in an open letter to the bishops of France.

Thus even before Vatican II came to a close a sizeable public in France had become aware of the extent of the transformation. The young priest, Georges de Nantes, had begun to publish a newsletter daringly entitled *La Contre-Reforme Catholique*. Madiran's *Heresy of the Twentieth*

*Century* and Salleron's *Subversion in the Liturgy* came out, along with a major work by the Belgian philosopher, Marcel de Corte. Defining the new orientations as "a spiritual degradation more profound than anything the Church has experienced in history, a cancerous sickness in which the cells multiply fast in order to destroy what is healthy in the Catholic Church, he called them "an attempt to transform the kingdom of God into the kingdom of Man, to substitute for the Church consecrated to the worship of God, a Church dedicated to the cult of humanity. This is the most dreadful, the most terrible of heresies."

Meanwhile a village curate in Burgundy, Louis Coache, holder of a degree in Canon Law, was publishing a sharply critical periodical which he called *Letters of a Country Priest* and he was reviving a local custom long in disuse, the open-air *Corpus Christi* procession. People began coming by the hundreds from all over France to the little town of Monjavoult in the lush Burgundian farmland to walk in solemn procession behind the Sacred Host in its glittering monstrance, singing and praying, as deacons swung inscensors and little girls scattered flowers along the path. By the third *Corpus Christi* march, Fr. Coache's bishop (as in the case of Joan of Arc, it was the Bishop of Beauvais) had had enough of critical journalism and outdated devotions. He ordered an end to the celebrations and he suspended the Abbé *"a divinis "*. Under this ban priests are forbidden to perform their priestly functions. Undaunted, Fr. Coache not only continued to say Mass, he founded a retreat house in the nearby town of Flavigny. French participation in the 1971 pilgrimage to Rome was largely due to the efforts of Fr. Coache and it was he, five years later, who persuaded the aged Msgr. Ducaud-Bourget and his flock to

undertake the dramatic occupation of the Paris church of St. Nicolas-du-Chardonnet.

Already by the end of the 1960's the revolution, so long in the undermining stage, was clearly in place. It had been a relatively smooth operation, thanks to the fact that it had been carried out, not by declared enemies of the Church, but by her professed devotees. Unlike the near seizure in the sixteenth century with its violent clamor for breakdown, the twentieth century overturn had been accomplished in comparative silence amid an orderly combination of stacked position papers, situation reports, conference agendas, curricular projects, all of which moved through committees, commissions, working groups, study sessions, discussions and dialogues. Once the Second Vatican Council opened, the overturn was assiduously promoted in articles, press conferences, interviews, exhortations, encyclicals, all in an atmosphere of ecclesiastical prudence and discretion.

The Council finished, it became the turn of the commentators. In rapid succession in Europe and America, article after article, book after book appeared, attempting to explain what had happened. Admirably detailed accounts of each session of the Council claimed to pinpoint the precise moment in which each of the changes had been effected. Much of the writing was done by liberal theologians and laymen who extolled what they called "the great work of opening the Church to the world". Even more was written by conservatives who, while generally accepting the legitimacy of Vatican II, attempted to show how its worthy intentions had been distorted. These writers were particularly hard on what they called "the Rhine Group", a set of liberal-minded cardinals, bishops and their *periti* hailing mainly from northern Europe, who, it was alleged, dominated the debates, monopolized

media attention, to end up influencing the silent majority of Council Fathers to vote their "progressive" way. Commentators who came to be called "traditionalist" were inclined to dismiss the Council altogether, claiming to see in it an attempt to destroy the Church.

In all the writing, the Second Vatican Council, ("Pope John's Council", they called it) was the protagonist. What happened on the floor of St. Peter's Basilica between October 1962 and December 1965 was the whole story. The Vatican itself fostered this idea and continues to foster it today, passing judgment on virtually every problem that arises "according to the Council", even referring at times to "the Conciliar Church". In a very real sense Vatican II documents have become the new Holy Scripture.

It is with this contrived inflation of the importance of the Second Vatican Council that the present study parts company with the writers on the Right as well as those on the Left and with the pretense of the Vatican because, as Pope Paul's good friend, the French man of letters, Jean Guitton, wrote in *l'Osservatore Romano,* "It was long before the Council that new forms of spirituality, mission, catechism, liturgical language, biblical study and ecumenism were proposed. It was long before the Council that a new spirit was born in the Church."

It was very long indeed. For all their shock value, the sight and sound of new kinds of worship, so startling to Catholics and non-Catholics alike in the late 1960's, were only the far-shore waves of an explosion detonated a quarter of a century earlier.

Jesuit theologians point to June 29, 1943 as the day of the "big bang". Fr. Virgilio Rotondi, S.J., editorialist of *Civiltá Cattólica,* semi-official voice of the Vatican, was elated: "All honest men, and all intelligent men who are

honest, recognize that the revolution took place with the publication of the encyclical of Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*. Then it was that the groundwork was laid for the 'new-time' from which would emerge the Second Vatican Council."

As a new-time Jesuit, Fr. Rotondi in the 1970's was naturally pointing with pride to the historical event that he and his colleagues saw as the successful culmination of agitation going on inside the Company for half a century, beginning with the Anglican convert, George Tyrell, and carrying on, ever more openly, with the bewildering fantasies of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin.

Fellow Jesuit Avery Dulles explains the nature of the explosion. "Until June 1943 the juridical and societal model of the Church was in peaceful possession but then it was suddenly replaced by the mystical body concept." The designation was not new. It had been presented to the Fathers of the First Vatican Council seventy years earlier. They had rejected it out of hand on the grounds that it was "confusing, ambiguous, vague and inappropriately biological".

Indeed, it had been the growing proliferation of a whole set of nebulous theological concepts that had prompted Pius IX to call a council in the first place. Once in session, the bishops of 1870 put forward their views on the nature of the Church in no uncertain terms. "We teach and we do declare that the Church has all the marks of a true society. Christ did not leave this society without a set form. Rather He, Himself, gave it existence and His will determined its constitution. The Church is not part or member of any other society. It is so perfect in itself that it is distinct from all other societies and stands far above them."

The man who was governing the Church in the year 1943 was talking a different language. He could, he said, "find no expression more noble and sublime than the phrase 'mystical body of Christ'." Catholics agreed. The phrase used in a pastoral, non-juridical sense, can be traced back to St. Paul. Considered to be hopelessly old-fashioned by progressive theologians of today, it remains dear to conservative Catholics. That it is no longer useful to the post-Conciliar Vatican becomes clear on reading the recent encyclical of John Paul II, *Ut Unum Sint*. Referring to the Church one or more times on each of the 114 pages of text, he never once uses the term "mystical body".

While in reality the papal letter of the 1940's tended to demote God, even as it elevated His creatures, the current conception that the term is "exclusive" would make it unhelpful in promoting the main thrust of *Ut Unum Sint,* the plea that Catholics join hands with non-Catholics in what it calls "the search for truth", quite as though Revelation had never occurred, or at least that neither the Pope of Rome nor his hundreds of millions of followers had ever heard of it.

Rarely found in Catholic writing prior to 1943 and not at all as an image of the Church in the liturgy, the phrase "body of Christ" meant for St. Paul simply the Christians of his time. Three centuries later St. Augustine used the Pauline term, adding to the "body" all the just since Abel. For St. Thomas Aquinas the words signified "living Catholics in the state of grace". Apparently what inspired Pius XII to give quasi canonical status to the term, elevating it to "mystical", were the writings of a contemporary, Emile Mersch. By-passing objections voiced at the first Vatican Council, this Belgian Jesuit presented a new con-

cept by identifying the Church with the human body, adding to it, as the encyclical would, two Persons of the Blessed Trinity. In the analogy Our Lord is taken as the head, popes and bishops the bones and ligaments, the Holy Ghost the life force. Although difficult to find in print today, a considerable number of theologians in 1943 are known to have echoed the protests of Vatican I, pointing to a departure from reality in the divination of the Church and the unsuitability of the biological references.

Should the boast of the neo-Jesuits of *Civiltá Cattólica* that the Pacelli encyclical opened the way to Vatican II appear far-fetched, consider the fact that until then the Magisterium had insisted that God was God and that we were His creatures, Christians among us the group or body of Christ. The body Pius XII envisioned must be capitalized and raised to mystical status, since he declared it contained God the Son and God the Holy Ghost.

Why did the still-orthodox Council fathers of 1870 reject this arbitrary new arrangement of God and man? Because it reduced the transcendent God to the immanent God, the ancient heresy. Without that reduction as a basis for new attitudes, the acceptance, twenty years later, of radical change would have been unthinkable. The mystical body concept divinizes men in line with the false promise Masonry has always offered. Masonic writing is full of references to “the divine spark that is in each one of us”. As the Masonic Satanist, Elena Blavatsky, put it, “the more polished the looking-glass, the more clear the divine image. And Paul VI on Christmas, 1960: “Are you looking for God? You will find Him in man!”

*Everyman's Encyclopedia* (1958) takes from Pius X's *Pascendi* precise definitions: "Immanence is a philosophical term used to denote the concept that the Deity pervades the universe, that His existence is expressed only by the unrolling of the natural cosmos. It is in opposition to transcendentalism, which teaches that the Deity has an existence apart from the universe, which is only a subsidiary expression of His activity."

Tampering with the transcendence of Almighty God, *albeit* "in a noble and sublime way", has led Chicago nuns to dance around a black cauldron in worship of an "earth mother" and Cardinal Ratzinger the Prefect for the Doctrine of the Faith, to call "senseless", visits to the Blessed Sacrament.

That the average priest or layman of the 1940's saw anything important happening to the Church with the publication of *Mystici Corporis* can be ruled out. In normal times papal encyclicals are studied by theologians, read by a limited number of bishops and priests and glanced over by subscribers to religious periodicals. However, the year 1943 was not a normal year. It marked the most terrible period of the Second World War. In any case papal emphasis on the phrase would have seemed, to the average Catholic who did read the document, to fall in line quite naturally with such revered designations as "Lamb of God", the "Sacred Heart" or any of the long list of exalted titles accorded the Virgin Mary in her litany. It certainly would never have entered their minds that those two words would be able to rock the boat, the age-old Barque of Peter.

To the serious student of theology, however, it was clear that the phrase "mystical body" in the mind of Pope Pius XII went much farther than mere pious name-giving. Used as he used it in

the encyclical, the phrase tore the Church away from its institutional character of nearly two millennia, thus setting aside its ancient identity for a thrust into the future.

Almost immediately Pope Pacelli's encyclical gave rise to a new intellectual discipline, ecclesiology. The word "ecclesiology" which until 1943 meant the study of church architecture and archeology, was now adopted to mean a study of how the Church looks at Herself. For more than nineteen hundred years there had been no name for such a study because there had been no such study. The Roman Catholic Church knew what it was, so did the hierarchy, the clergy and the faithful. Suddenly confronted with the new image indicated in the encyclical, it seemed urgent to question what it was the Church really thought Herself to be. Overnight a new kind of theologian, the ecclesiologist, had to be invented and installed in seminaries, universities and on editorial staffs of Catholic publications.

Very soon these scholars found they had more than enough to do. The abrupt transition from Perfect Society to Mystical Body turned out to be only the beginning. It was not long before this first paradigm shift, to use the ecclesiologists' jargon, gave way to another. "Very soon", writes Fr. Dulles, "ecclesiologists were asking themselves 'is the Mystical Body a pure communion of grace or is it visible? Would not perhaps People of God be more appropriate?"

Dulles goes on to explain that no sooner had People of God been accepted (it was the favorite at Vatican II) than the influential French Dominican, Yves Congar, pointed out its weakness, "Does it not sound egotistical, monopolistic? How about calling the Church a Mystery?" Then it was that Jesuit Fr. (later Cardinal) De Lubac of the

Gregorian University opted for designating the Church as a Sacrament. His reasoning? "If Christ is the Sacrament of God, then the Church is the Sacrament of Christ." Never mind that Catholics had been taught since time immemorial that there are just seven sacraments and that neither the Church nor Christ is one of them.

Non-Catholics began to play the paradigm game. Karl Barth, the Swiss Calvinist whom Pius XII once pointed to as his favorite theologian, suggested that Catholics call their Church a Herald-of-the-Word while Protestant radicals, Harvey Cox and Dietrich Bonhbffer, recommended the Church of Rome be called a Servant.

The usually unflappable Jesuits took alarm. Their ecclesiologists could find no precedent for the Servant image in Holy Scripture. Besides, they objected, did not the connotation of servility present certain ambiguities? Indeed from the Perfect Society "far-above-all-others" to the Church-as-Servant, theologians had traveled a long way and in the process, just as the Fathers of Vatican I had predicted, they had frittered away the identity of the Roman Catholic Church.

Avery Dulles admits, "The contemporary Church is racked by paradigm shifts, so that we find the phenomena of polarization, mutual incomprehension, inability to communicate, frustration and discouragement. When the paradigm shifts, people suddenly find the ground cut out from under their feet. They cannot begin to speak the new language without already committing themselves to a whole set of values that may not be to their taste. They then find themselves gravely threatened in their spiritual serenity."

Dulles is a priest addressing priests. While details of the confusing shifts hardly get through to the man and woman in the pew, at least not until another comes along to take their place, the faithful are only too painfully aware of what can happen to the spiritual serenity of their pastors, as they watch the sweeping defection of the clergy. In the United States it is estimated that around ten thousand priests and up to fifty thousand male and female religious have abandoned their vocations. Half of the five hundred or so seminaries have been closed and the average age of the clergy is over sixty.

Priestly defections continue worldwide at around four thousand a year. In France, formerly averaging one thousand ordinations annually there are now less than one hundred. As serenity has vanished from the priesthood, so worshippers have vanished from the churches. In Paris, Mass attendance is down to 12% of the population. Even in so-Catholic Spain only 20% of the citizens attend Sunday Mass regularly and only 3% of the priests are under 40 years of age. According to the Chicago-based National Opinion Research Center, the drop-off of practicing Catholics between the years 1972 and 1973 may well have constituted the most dramatic collapse of religious devotion in the entire history of Christianity.

Current popular journalism has it that priests have defected because of the Vatican's insistence on the rule of celibacy and that the laity has defected because of the Vatican prohibition of artificial birth control. Forced to admit that those restrictions have been part of the Catholic way of life over the centuries, the writers counter with the thesis that modern man, even Catholic modern man, has reached such a level of "self awareness" that he cannot, must not, tolerate any con-

trol of his freedom.

The theory is spurious and altogether divorced from reality. True believers undertake any discipline. History shows they can weather a lack of churches, priests and sacraments, take strong doses of persecution, even face martyrdom. What they cannot weather is a removal of spiritual certainties. The taunts of outsiders can make their faith stronger but when the taunts, the doubts, come from within, their belief and consequently their strength, wavers. At the first suggestion of doubt on the part of his teachers, what young man will not begin to wonder if he has the kind of faith needed to support the priestly life? The trials of celibacy quite suddenly seem too difficult.

What the tampering with tradition did to Catholics was to deprive them of their Church-as-Institution, that solid and ancient framework they had counted on for support in the delicate task of believing and the difficult task of living as Catholics. Bereft they are, not because of imposed limits but because of the lack of them.

The men and women who came to Rome in 1971 to pray through the night in front of the Basilica of St. Peter were praying that the framework be held together and that the debilitating decrees of Vatican II be revoked. Like the writers who were getting out books and articles at the time, they thought all the trouble lay with the Council. The idea that an encyclical issued twenty-eight years before could have shaken spiritual serenity all over the world, that its author could have been the Pope they revered above all others, would have seemed to them altogether incredible.

In the hope of making the seemingly incredible not only credible but obvious, this study will ignore the Second Vatican Council as a cause and treat it as an effect, the inevitable effect of a dedicated, single-minded line of action begun decades before John XXIII called the bishops of the world to assemble. His summons will be seen not so much as a call for consultations as a demand for signatures. With many of the transformations already in place and many of the others well worked out on paper, John's welcome to the long, slow procession of high-mitred prelates on that October morning in 1962 will be seen as the fulfillment of an extended, persistent undertaking.

In perspective, the Council appears to have been a bringing of the hierarchy to Rome in order to show them what was already happening, to give them the satisfaction of a very limited amount of participation and then to exert strong moral pressure on them to put their names to each and every document emerging from the skillfully managed deliberations. Signatures were of the greatest importance, giving as they would, credibility to the transformations, thus making it easier for the bishops to face their flocks when they returned with a bag full of novelties.

That the Second Vatican Council is the point of departure for so many commentators is understandable. While a look at events of earlier years would make it easy for them to pick up the strands of change, it would also mean having to confront the figure of Eugenio Pacelli, Pope Pius XII, a discomforting prospect for liberal and conservative alike. For the Left, with the passage of the years, if not in his lifetime, Pacelli is an arch-conservative, sadly unenlightened and probably anti-Semitic. For the Right, at this distance, a saint. In both cases his life and work have

come to be overlaid with pious and impious myth.

Probably no pope in history has been as misunderstood. He has been revered and scorned, loved and hated for all the things he never did and never was. No pope in history did as much to change the Church; yet Catholic conservatives look on him as the last firm pillar of orthodoxy. No pope in history ever did as much for the Jews; yet Jewish writers continue to accuse him of indifference to their fate. No pope did as much to oblige the Marxists; yet he is hailed in the West as an anti-Communist hero of the Cold War.

In his long years as Vatican diplomat when he pioneered what has come to be called *Ostpolitik,* in his decade as Secretary of State to Pius XI, in his nearly twenty years as Supreme Pontiff to be followed in extension through the pontificate of his protégée and chosen heir, Giovanni Battista Montini, the work of Pius XII spanned nearly a century.

If the facts of the transformation of the Church are to be honestly accounted for, then the facts of the Pacelli contribution to them will have to be made a part of that account. Ample material is available. With the Second World War so long over, American and German archives have been opened and memoirs of important figures of the time are being published. Vatican secrecy, however, can be and often is, everlasting. It was only the accusation against Pius XII concerning his alleged indifference to the Jews that caused a limited section of Vatican Archives to be opened to four Jesuit scholars in the 1970's. With or without Vatican cooperation, however, there is still a wealth of Pacelli material available, enough to leave only the foolhardy willing to continue to cling to the old myths.

Granted that Eugenio Pacelli was a giant among popes and that his period of activity was unusually long, one may ask what a pope has to do with revolution. In the case of the Roman Catholic Church, everything. While it would be hard to find a guerrilla movement, be it the Italian Red Brigades or the Peruvian Shining Path that was not inspired and directed by university students and professors, in the Church with its unbudgeable hierarchical structure, the intellectual top, the level at which theologians move, is not high enough. Any mutation in doctrine or practice must come from the very top, from the papacy itself. There is no other way.

While Eugenio Pacelli was the dominant figure in the undermining process, he was not alone. Four other Italians shared his enterprise. Giacomo Della Chiesa, Angelo Roncalli and Giovanni Battista Montini were popes while Pietro Gasparri, as Secretary of State, conducted his phase of the operation as though he were. What the five accomplished was no small thing, being the transformation of the single largest religious body in the world, a body which had gone virtually unchanged for nearly two thousand years.

Unchanged, it had weathered the great breakaway four hundred years before, even gaining from the blow a certain strength through forced redefinition of its own identity. The Protestant shock had been a severing. What has happened in our day has been no break but rather an inside turnover, something altogether more drastic. Measured against what had been taken to be the Catholic identity for nineteen centuries, the undermined Church of today is something quite new. While the outward structures of its diminished bulk have been made more rigid than ever, there has been a hollowing out of nearly all the old verities that had been its life.

*Undermining,* says the Dictionary, refers to "the removal of a foundation by clandestine means". As far as the average Catholic goes, what was taken from his Church was indeed taken clandestinely, although not all the secrecy was deliberate. Changes taking place under papal guidance among clerical insiders were simply not shared or publicized while the faithful, steadily deprived of theological teaching, tended increasingly to look to their own piety, something the transformers were careful not to disturb. As a result, until the first media light was thrown on Council sessions, the average Catholic remained unaware that a revolution had taken place. His natural reaction, once the New Mass was imposed, was to assume that it was the Council that had changed things.

The following twelve episodes in a six-decade chronology will attempt for the first time to link together the chain of Vatican moves, some clandestine, some openly proclaimed, that forged the strange New Catholic Church.

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# II

# CHRONICLE
# 1903-1963

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## *Forming an Alliance*

If the Catholic revolution was not born in the sessions of the Second Vatican Council, neither can it be said to have originated, *pace* Fr. Rotondi, in 1943 with *Mystici Corporis*. While the Church had, in a real sense, been under a state of siege since the French Revolution, the first impulses destined to move Pope Pius XII to pronounce his great paradigm shift can be traced to the turn of the century.

It was a period when the world seemed inordinately proud of itself. Relative peace and prosperity had gone on longer than many men could remember. Enormous empires had spread over the world and were functioning more or less satisfactorily, while men of science were piling promise on generous promise for the future. True, there had been a few sharp signals of tragedy ahead in the assassination of an American President, an Austrian Empress and an Italian King, but Vladimir Lenin was still musing over the afternoon newspapers in a Zurich coffee house, the bereaved Emperor was still kneeling through Mass each morning in the Hofburg and his devoted Viennese were still whirling to the waltzes of Johann Strauss.

The early 1900's were relatively favorable years for the Catholic Church, in spite of harsh doses of anti-clericalism from the governments of Italy and France. While the missionary work of French and Belgian religious orders had scarcely begun in Africa,

Church membership in the rest of the world was distributed much as it is today. Although Pope Leo XIII, like his predecessor Pius IX, insisted that he was a "prisoner in the Vatican" in protest against insurgent Italy's seizure of the Papal States, he had reached the age of ninety after a notably productive reign, little frustrated by captive status. He had pursued vigorously a program of seminary reform, opened the Vatican Library to scholars, founded a commission for biblical studies and issued fifty encyclicals, the most salient being *Humanum Genus,* a candid denunciation of Freemasonry, and *Rerum Novarum* in which he outlined the Church's position on labor relations.

Alive and well as the new century began were the five Italians who, in the course of the coming decades, were to take on the task of transforming the Roman Church. Oldest among them was Pietro Gasparri, 48, the Neapolitan who would become Secretary of State for both Benedict XV and Pius XI. Giacomo Della Chiesa, the Genovese who would reign as Benedict was 46, Eugenio Pacelli, 24, a Roman just ordained, would become Pius XII. There were two Lombards, Angelo Roncalli, the future Pope John XXIII, and the three-year-old Giovanni Battista Montini who would become Paul VI.

Already the lives of the four men and, through his parents, that of the child, were linked with one another. As the years went on, their careers would intertwine in what might be seen as a kind of team effort which would be of great practical help in their unusual undertaking. A 'conspiracy'? The term is too facile, with its melodramatic overtones, and too simplistic in its failure to take into consideration the fact that each of these men, coming from the particular families they came from, experiencing the

particular education they experienced and subjected to the particular influences they were subjected to, could not, short of five major miracles, have acted differently from the way they did.

Let us say they held the same vision and that the vision was that of a new kind of Catholic Church. They were not the only men of their time who held such a vision, however, because of the power each one of them would wield, they were to become its executors. One after the other in close succession they would come to see, slowly at first, their vision taking shape. Its accelerating development would sustain them for half a century and more, right up to the last years of the last of the five when statistics began to show that the dream was turning into a nightmare and Pope Montini, ill-suited for carrying such a burden, broke down in tears.

On Montini, weakest of the five, and on Pacelli, the strongest, the pressure was heaviest. Biographical material indicates an astonishing parallel in the early lives of the two men. Each was chosen, educated and promoted by his parents and powerful inside-Vatican friends of his parents, to become a pope as surely as a crown prince is groomed to become a king. Both the Pacelli and the Montini families had long been bound up in Vatican affairs. Eugenio's grandfather, Marcantonio, had come to Rome earlier in the century from the Province of Viterbo when his brother Ernesto, a member of the Rothschild banking firm, undertook to facilitate a sizeable loan to the Papal States under Pope Gregory XVI. Ernesto stayed on to set up the first offices of the Banco di Roma while Marcantonio became the trusted legal advisor of both Gregory and his successor, Pius IX, finally accompanying the latter into exile in the coastal town of Gaeta when political unrest in Rome seemed threatening.

The Rothschild connection soon gave rise to the near certainty that the Pacelli banking family, like the Montinis were of Jewish origin.

The instigation of unrest in the Papal States justifiable or not, must be attributed to the heads of Italian Freemasonry. Even as the Protestants of the sixteenth century were ex-Catholics who were sure they had found a better way to worship, so the Masons who badgered Catholic countries with anti-clerical movements and governments throughout the nineteenth century, were ex-Catholics, sure they had found a better way to live and to manage society. In the Catholic countries, particularly in Italy and France, the lines were not always clearly drawn. It is known that at the time of the French Revolution hundreds of Frenchmen added a Masonic oath to their priestly vows and, according to numerous Masonic sources, Fr. Mastai-Ferretti, who would become Pope Pius IX, was admitted to the Eterna Catena Lodge of Palermo in 1837 at the age of 46. Ten years later as Pope he was granting a general amnesty to the most revolutionary of all the Brotherhood, the *Carbonari,* and halting the work of Jacques Cretineau-Joli, S.J., whom Gregory XVI had ordered to investigate Masonic activity in the Papal States. The Austrian Monarchy, aware of the Mastai-Ferretti orientation, had tried to prevent his election when, unexpectedly, it was rushed through.

Whatever happened to the thinking of Pius IX during the two years in exile, it was enough to make him return to the Vatican a changed man. Henceforth he was to dedicate himself to the defense of the Church against its enemies and his States against subversion. Père Cretineau-Joly was reinstated. *Pio Nono,* as the Italians called him with affection, lived to summon the Vatican Council of 1870, which has come now to be called the “First”.

On the return from Gaeta Marcantonio Pacelli left the Pope's side to join the founders of the Vatican newspaper, *I'Osservatore Romano.* As in the case of the Montini child, years later, Eugenio, the grandson of Marcantonio, was not permitted to attend school. Said to be too frail (as the little Montini would be said to be), he was tutored at home until the last years of high school when he received a diploma from the Liceo Visconti, well known among Romans to be the state-run educational center more hostile to the Church than any other in the city.

Eugenio Pacelli had been only two when his father brought him to the bedside of the dying Pius IX who is reported to have said, "Teach this little son well so that one day he will serve the Holy See." Pius IX's successor, Leo XIII, carried on the tradition that the Pacelli's were a "Vatican family" taking Eugenio, the high school graduate, to put him in the special care of his Secretary of State, Cardinal Rampolla. "Make a good diplomat of him," was the Pope's bidding. Again the youth was not to live a normal school life. Priestly training proceeded privately until the last two years of study when the Cardinal prevailed upon the Rector of the Istituto Capranica to accept his charge as a day student.

If the Pacelli family's choice of the Liceo Visconti had been an odd one, the Cardinal's choice of the Capranica was staggering. In the 1890's this seminary was known up and down Italy to be the headquarters of the kind of theological radicalism soon to be labeled "Modernism". To our day the school has upheld that reputation, feting the "Red Abbot" Franzoni after his suspension *a divinis* in the 1970's and CIDOC's Ivan Illich, while neighbors continue to complain of all-night celebrations spilling out into the

darkened old streets at each major Leftist triumph from the abortion victory in the Italian Parliament to referendum results in Chile. While things would have been a good deal more sedate at the end of the last century, unorthodox teaching may well have been more serious.

The content of the private instruction offered the future Pius XII may never be known; however his scanty schooling in isolation and the revolutionary bent of the schools he did attend, added up to strange preparation for a career in the Catholic hierarchy. As Pope he was to remain faithful to the Capranica, taking one of his very rare excursions outside the Vatican in 1957 in order to inspect restoration work he himself had ordered on the main buildings.

It is when we come to the name of the man Pope Leo entrusted with the guidance of the boy, Pacelli, that it is more difficult to avoid the term “conspiracy”, if only because the Sicilian nobleman was one of the most controversial figures in the history of the Catholic Church. Holding the second most important post in the Vatican for sixteen of the twenty-six years of the pontificate of Leo XIII, it had been taken for granted that Cardinal Rampolla would become the next pope. When Leo finally died in 1903 and a conclave was held, Rampolla votes mounted in early balloting until, to the astonishment of the electors, the Cardinal Metropolitan of Krakow rose to his feet to halt the proceedings with an announcement that would be telegraphed around the world. Speaking on behalf of His Imperial Majesty, Franz Josef of Austria-Hungary, the Polish primate pronounced a veto on the election of Cardinal Rampolla. As annoyed as they were astonished, the Fathers soon found that a long forgotten clause in a treaty between

Vienna and the Vatican made the intervention legally binding.

No reason for the veto was given, although a political one was suggested. It was supposed that Austria had been displeased by some of Rampolla's pro-French attitudes. Years later, however, it was revealed that one Msgr. Jouin, a French priest dedicated to tracking down Freemasons with the zeal of a Simon Wiesenthal tracking down Nazis, had come upon what he claimed was irrefutable evidence that the Cardinal was not only a member of the Brotherhood but that he was Grand Master of a particularly occult sect known as the *Ordo Templi Orientis* into which he had been initiated in Switzerland a few years earlier. Jouin's efforts to bring this information to the attention of Pope Leo were naturally frustrated by Rampolla, his followers and friends in the offices of State. Anxious that the facts be known in advance of the forthcoming conclave, Jouin contacted the Austrian court and found a hearing there.

In a recent study the Italian historian, Giovanni Vannoni, goes into some detail on the subject of the *Ordo Templi Orientis,* known as the *OTO*. He calls it "one of the most disconcerting secret societies existing at the present time". It was founded only a few years before the papal conclave in question by a prosperous Viennese whose frequent travels to the Far East had made him an adept in "the techniques of sexual magic" as taught by certain yogis in India. Cofounders of *OTO* were two Germans, Theodor Reuss who was also a member of the very occult England-based Rite of Memphis, and Franz Hartmann, a physician who had spent years in the United States attached to the headquarters of Madame Blavatsky's Theosophical Society. Later devotees of *OTO* would include Rudolf Steiner whose teaching would play an important role in the life of Angelo Roncalli, causing his dismissal from the

faculty of the Lateran seminary. The *OTO*'s most notorious member was probably Aleister Crowley, immortalized in the first successful novel of Somerset Maugham, *The Magician*. Elected Grand Master in 1912, Crowley proclaimed himself to be "under guidance of a Higher Intelligence" that was counseling him to "open doors on a New Age, that which was destined to supersede the Christian Era already in its death agony".

It may well have been alarm following Leo's strong indictment of Masonry in *Humanum Genus* that caused the Brotherhood to force its way into real Vatican power. It took three years until Rampolla himself was made Secretary of State. Once so courageous, the Pope, after decades with the *OTO* chief at his side, would refer discreetly to the dissidents around Cardinal Gibbons as "Americanists", whereas *Civiltà Cattólica* was calling their Rome center a Masonic lodge.

Of particular interest is the tracing of Rampolla's relationship with the five men who soon were to direct the Catholic Church into its "new era". Giacomo Della Chiesa, the future Benedict XV, was a Capranica graduate chosen by Rampolla as his private secretary at the Nunciature in Madrid. It was to become a twenty-year relationship. As Secretary of State, Cardinal Rampolla brought Pietro Gasparri from the Catholic Institute in Paris to Rome to become his chief assistant. Gasparri would become the power behind the throne of Pius XI. Meanwhile young Fr. Pacelli, long under the direct tutelage of Rampolla, became his private secretary and regular traveling companion on important diplomatic missions. Together they attended the funeral of Queen Victoria. Subsequently and still in his mid-twenties, Fr. Pacelli, working as *minutante* in the offices of State, was given access to high level Vatican meetings.

In and out of the offices of Secretary Rampolla in those days was the journalist-politician father of the future Paul VI, Giorgio Montini, whose idea of a Church-sponsored political party had caught Rampolla's fancy. Pope Leo, however, was not persuaded. As for the future Pope John, his career was related to Cardinal Rampolla through the latter's good friend and confidant, Msgr. Radini-Tedeschi, a long time fellow worker with Della Chiesa in the offices of State. Angelo Roncalli, coming from a poor peasant family, owed his education and rise to the episcopate entirely to Radini-Tedeschi, becoming his private secretary and going on to write the bishop's biography after his death.

Given the power of the Sicilian Cardinal's personal charisma and the alleged direction of his commitment, traditional Catholics are quick to point to a "Rampolla clique" and even to a "Rampolla mafia". An alliance there certainly was. The Vatican's *l'Osservatore Romano* admitted as much in an editorial celebrating the election of Cardinal Roncalli to the papacy in 1958, "It was Benedict XV (Giacomo Della Chiesa) who, as he had done with Achille Ratti (Pius XI) and Eugenio Pacelli (Pius XII), put the foot of Angelo Roncalli, whom we now known as John XXIII, on the first rung of the ladder that led to the Chair of Peter".

## *Suffering a Setback*

Giorgio and Giuditta Montini, parents of the future Paul VI, may have had as much to do as anyone with the hurried substitution of Giuseppe Sarto, Patriarch of Venice, for Secretary Rampolla, after the sensational interruption of the Conclave of 1903. In his frequent trips to the Vatican Montini may well have expressed the family's preference for Sarto, a preference conveyed by Rampolla to the bewildered and frustrated electors. The Brescia group headed by the Montini's, as they worked to create a Catholic political party, had been in touch with the Patriarch when he was organizing after-work clubs for day laborers in Venice.

"He is a man of our way of thinking", Montini is quoted as saying. That he was a man of sincere humility and simplicity may also have recommended him as a substitute for Rampolla. Indeed, as the Conclave resumed and his election seemed imminent he was heard to protest to Cardinal Gibbons "But I know nothing of world affairs!" to which the American replied, "So much the better!"

Better indeed for what was going to continue to be a Rampolla Vatican, the presence in the Chair of Peter of a man who could be guided, even manipulated. Biographers of Giuseppe Sarto, St. Pius X, tend to skip over the fact that this brave hero for Traditionalists appointed Mariano Rampolla to what, in the agitated theological climate of 1903 was the most sensitive post in the Curia, Prefect for the Doctrine of the Faith, the Holy Office.

If the move seems incongruous, let it be one more strong support for the thesis of this book: the undermining didn't happen during Vatican II. Clearly, 16 years with an *OTO* chief as Secretary of State had established a Masonic grip on the Vatican so unyielding as to bring the 1903 conclave to conclude in a "deal", a compromise. Although the Jouin information had not gone out to the public, the Vatican knew it would, thus leaving the papacy itself in a vulnerable position. The truth about Rampolla would appear to be absurd if he were given the Holy Office by the Pope.

What rescued the Sarto pontificate was the astonishing appointment of Rafael Merry del Val as Secretary of State. At 38, this English-born and educated, half Irish son of a Spanish diplomat, knew a great deal about world affairs. He had helped the Patriarch establish the workingmen's clubs and must as well have helped him to an intense awareness of the goals of the Lodges. As an enemy of Masonry, Merry del Val has had few apologists and those who have written dwell on his piety, humility and "boy's town" in a Roman slum, ignoring what must have been an eleven-year battle for the Faith. Rampolla headed the Holy Office, while Della Chiesa was Under-Secretary of State. Still the first four Sarto years were quiet with Pius X apparently totally absorbed in reviving Gregorian chant and urging early and frequent Holy Communion.

By the conclave year, 1903, a surprising number of the theses which were destined to transform the Church during the next sixty years were already in circulation, deviations in orthodox doctrine as old as Christianity and as far in the future as Pope John Paul II. Mainly in France but also in England, Italy and Belgium, an alternative attitude toward religion was beginning to surface in seminaries,

universities, on lecture platforms, in books and reviews. What would come to be called *Modernism* was underway. The movement had no founder, no program. It boasted only a set of shared attitudes which included rejection of the teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas as "medieval" and a feeling that religion must have its origin in personal experience of which "dogma can be an expression but not a suffocating guarantee". Among the frequent reunions of devotees of this different way to be Catholic, the one at Subiaco in Italy brought together delegates from France, Switzerland and Italy who were urged to "tear away the bindings that oppress and stifle the Church". In a moment of unrestrained exaltation it was declared that everyone present felt "Christ is preparing an immense religious transformation by means of the Prophets and the Saints".

Unlike the dissidents of the sixteenth century the innovators had no desire to leave the Church. Rather they hoped to remake it from within. Euphoria over the coming of a new century as well as excitement over unusual initiatives in historical and scientific research, apparently contributed to a growing urge to invent new ways to believe.

Pope Leo, in his nineties, with Cardinal Rampolla at his side was not one to try to stem the tide of theological speculation. However, neither did he do the slightest thing to encourage it. If, in the early 1900's religious novelties had been given the kind of Vatican support the theological innovations of the 1950's were going to receive, the great transformation would surely have taken shape before the Second World War. That such support had been expected with the election of Mariano Rampolla to the papacy must be assumed.

Whether or not Merry del Val pressured the Pope to remove the two longtime associates of Cardinal Rampolla from his office, it was not until 1907 when Radini-Tedeschi was consecrated Bishop of Bergamo and Della Chiesa, Bishop of Bologna, that Pius X made any major move against the growing chaos in Catholic intellectual circles. Then, citing a grand total of sixty-five separate aberrations of traditional doctrine to be found in current religious periodicals, he dubbed the lot "Modernism" and issued two formal denunciations, a pastoral letter beginning with the word *Lainentabili* and an encyclical beginning with *Pascendi*... He followed the two documents with the formulation of a lengthy Oath Against Modernism to be taken by the superiors of all religious orders, heads of seminaries, and theological faculties as well as by every priest at the time of his ordination.

The Oath acted liked a bracing tonic on restless, vacillating clergy. In some 500 succinct words it defined what Catholics are expected to believe. Beginning with God Himself "Who can be known with certainty by the natural light of reason" and by the "things that are made", it goes on to define the Church as instituted by the "historical Christ while He sojourned on earth". Hitting at the widespread existentialism among the dreamers of a new religion, the Oath reads, "I profess that faith is not a blind religious feeling bursting forth from the recesses of the subconscious... but the true assent of the intellect to the truth as received..." and "I reject the heretical invention of the evolution of dogma passing from one meaning to another." The Oath continued to be required up to the middle of the 1960's, by which time theological speculation had gone so far afield that to take the Oath would mean challenging the Second Vatican Council itself.

In 1907 however, the decisive action of Pius X was immediately effective. Insofar as it had been a movement, Modernism fell apart. Its precipitous decline can be seen at this distance to have been due to the fact that the theories it promoted were bereft of any Vatican conduit to the faithful. Thus Modernism remained exclusively a phenomenon of the academies. The average layman had little notion that doctrinal errors, let alone sixty-five varieties of them, were going the rounds. Had papal action continued to be lacking, however, young priests emerging from the seminaries would have given limited expression to the new concepts, but to have them spreading to the parishioners the theories would have had to go through the bishops and that would have meant Vatican involvement.

With Leo XIII and Pius X such involvement was out of the question. While the Rampolla group inside the Vatican must have felt encouraged when Modernism flourished and unhappy now that it had been quashed, they showed consummate wisdom in their refusal to give it the slightest public support. Conscious of the fact that new doctrines can only be absorbed into the Church through the acceptance and actuation of the papacy, they bided their time. After the publication of *Lamentabili, Pascendi* and the Oath they had only seven years to wait.

## *Starting Again*

The death of Pope Pius X occurred just eighteen days after the outbreak of the First World War. The eleven years of his intense and singularly honest pontificate left the Catholic Church with a renewed sense of identity, while decisive reaffirmation of the old certainties reawakened fervor and devotion.

At the same time the later Sarto years had represented a severe setback for the dreamers of a new way to be Catholic. Even to regain the promise the beginning of the twentieth century had offered would take years, perhaps decades. While resurgence was assured if the hoped for election of Giacomo Della Chiesa, the longtime secretary of Cardinal Rampolla, went through, it would perforce be slow. Given the new alertness on the part of the faithful to deviations in the old teachings, every move in the directions of a "Church of the Future" would have to be made with caution and couched in the most pious terminology. Archbishop Della Chiesa of Bologna did become Pope in 1914, taking the name of Benedict XV, while the other Rampolla protégée, Pietro Gasparri, moved into Merry del Val's post as Secretary of State. One wonders if the very old Emperor of Austria-Hungary, weighed down with tragedy on tragedy, was aware, two years before his death, that the Sicilian Cardinal, whose election his veto had prevented had, after all, mounted the papal throne in the person of his two closest assistants.

At the risk of indulging in generalities, a long look at the Catholic Church would seem to make certain sweeping qualifications plausible. Historically speaking, have there ever been missionaries to equal the Spaniards, martyrs to equal the English or thinkers about holy things, for better of for worse, as gifted as the French? If the new Pope hoped to reawaken liberalism, he would have to begin with the French. The particular target of Benedict, logically, was the group calling itself *Sodalitium Pianein,* an association of laity and a few priests dedicated to keeping vigil on expressions of heresy in teaching, preaching and publishing, according to the norms set forth by Pius X. Although the project originated in the minds of Merry del Val and his secretary, Fr. Benigni, a journalist by profession, it was in France that the idea flourished and where it showed no sign of tapering off after the death of Pius X. With its call to report directly to Rome on doctrinal aberrations, the *Sodalitium* was highly distasteful to Pope Benedict and to his Secretary of State. Years later when the process for the beatification of Giuseppe Sarto was in progress, Cardinal Gasparri voiced unrestrained bitterness, accusing Pius X of "approving, blessing and encouraging a secret society over and above the hierarchy which was dedicated to espionage in its effort to monitor even the most eminent cardinals. In short", he averred, "the Pope blessed a kind of masonry within the Church."

The Sarto canonization taking place during the Pacelli reign may seem to contradict the thesis that the latter was the prime mover in the changes. However, since at the same time the Pope was working with Fr. Bugnini on the New Mass and struggling with the still conservative Curia to put into action his Holy Week plans, it could have been a compromise, a mutual concession.

Pope Benedict struck at the *Sodalitium* in his first encyclical but he did it in muted terms, rather the way Pope Pacelli years later would strike at the theories of evolution being promoted by Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. There was no naming of names. *Ad beatissimi* was ostensibly a plea for world peace in the rapidly spreading Great War. It urged "an end to contention and discord in favor of a new sense of brotherhood". Although few of the laity, aside from the leaders of *Sodalitium,* would read the encyclical, it gave teachers and preachers everywhere to understand that the war between the Vatican and the Modernists was over. The leader of the long disbanded *Sillon,* prime target of *Lamentabili,* Marc Sangnier, had already received the good news in a warm personal letter from the new Pope in which Benedict expressed his "high esteem". Reading a work of the French dissident today it is difficult to believe he was not writing for the priestly junta of Nicaragua's Daniel Ortega, "The ideas of the revolution are nineteen centuries old and they come right out of the Gospels. The Church must therefore open up to the new trend and enter into the movement which is building the modern world."

As Cardinal Gasparri would later indicate, investigations by the troublesome French laity were coming uncomfortably close to "eminent cardinals". Already they had the anti-clerical government of France on the run so that by 1921, the last year of Benedict's reign, pressure from the Quai d'Orsay, combined with Gasparri's constant complaints, brought him to order the *Sodalitium* to disband.

On the hypothesis that men formed by Cardinal Rampolla were sufficiently entrenched in the power structure of the Vatican to be able to control the direction taken by an electoral conclave, it can be supposed that the

death of Pope Della Chiesa at 68 presented them with a dilemma. Had he lived the usual extended years of a man in religion his death, a decade later, would have found Eugenio Pacelli of a proper age to ascend the throne of Peter. At 48 he would have been thought by the faithful too young. There was, of course, Gasparri. However it would seem he preferred to remain in his post of Secretary of State. In any case he backed the election of the Archbishop of Milan, Achille Ratti, an exceedingly unlikely candidate.

A priest librarian until his sixty-second year, only three years a bishop with two of those years spent as a diplomat in media-remote Poland, devastated by the war, Ratti had been a Cardinal-Bishop in Italy for just seven months. Electors coming from outside Italy would hardly have heard of him and those in Italian posts precious little. It must have needed tremendous maneuvering on the part of his sponsors, which we assume were the Rampolla group around Gasparri, to assure venerable cardinals, many of them with decades of episcopal experience, that little-known Ratti was their man. In any case the effort succeeded and in the seventeen years that followed its backers would have reason to wish it had failed.

Achille Ratti, who took the name of Pope Pius XI, was the most learned of modern pontiffs. In contrast to the altogether sketchy, not to say peculiar, education to which Eugenio Pacelli had been subjected, that of Pius XI followed the usual course of a son of a northern Italian upper middle class family at the end of the last century. Leaving the seminary in Milan he took a triple doctorate at the Gregorian University in Rome and within a few years after ordination found himself the director of the great Ambrosias Library in Milan.

If not quite a member of the Vatican inner circle, neither was he quite out of it. He had been a student of Msgr. Radini-Tedeschi and, like Pope Della Chiesa, he had helped along the career of Radini-Tedeschi's young secretary, Angelo Roncalli. As a Milanese he had been on friendly terms with the Montini's of nearby Brescia as well.

On the other hand his choice of the name Pius had been made he said, out of regard for Pope Sarto who had moved him from the Ambrosias to head the Vatican Library and with whom, now and then, he had enjoyed conversation and tea at the Episcopal palace in Venice. How near he was in outlook to Pius X becomes evident in several of his encyclicals, while an equal number of his official acts amounted to major strides toward the creation of a new kind of Church. The paradox poses a nagging question which can be answered in one of only two ways: either Pius XI suffered from intermittent schizophrenia or his seventeen-year pontificate was a running battle with his successive Secretaries of State, Gasparri and Pacelli.

The year of his election, 1922, was one of tremendous portent for the world. It saw the birth of the Socialists Soviet Republics, the near starvation of millions of Germans, the converging on Rome of the Black Shirts of Mussolini, the relentless continuation of twenty minor wars and the conferring of the Nobel Prize for Science on a Swedish physicist for a notable breakthrough in nuclear fission.

The new Pope looked on the shambles of that age-old bulwark of Catholicism, the Hapsburg Empire (ruling house of Austria, 1282–1918), and its replacement with a rash of scattered republics decreed by the Treaty of St. Germain, with the eye of a traditionalist. In his first encyclical, *Orbi Arcani,* he decried the new egalitarianism, "With God excluded from political life, with authority derived not

from God but from man, the very basis for authority has been taken away, because the chief reason for the distinction between ruler and subject has been removed." Two years later he defined his principles concerning Church-State relations as the "Kingship of Christ" in the encyclical *Quas Primas*. Either encyclical could have been written by Pius X.

Then, as if heading in the opposite direction, at the end of his first year in office, Pius convoked a Eucharistic Congress in Rome. Details, which had been worked out by Cardinal Gasparri, included a midnight Mass on Christmas Eve at the high altar in St. Peter's with the Pope singing the liturgy in a ritual so far without precedent. The congregation sang the responses. Gasparri explained to the crowds that "the Pope ardently wishes that the faithful take part in the liturgy".

Pius XI was the first pope to actuate what we now call ecumenism. Like the word "ecclesiology" the word "ecumenism" was given a meaning it never had before. From signifying "general, pertaining to the whole world" thus, an ecumenical council, it is now taken to mean a coming together of the world's religions. In the 1920's Rome had not yet begun to foster what seems with Pope John Paul II to have become a consuming passion, a commitment to global religion. When the first steps were taken in the early 1920's, no one called it "ecumenism" or even "dialogue"; the gentle designation was "conversations".

The *Malines Conversations*, a project of the much publicized Desiré Cardinal Mercier of Malines-Brussels and his avant-garde theologian Lambert Beauduin, brought Britain's Lord Halifax to Belgium to discuss with certain members of Louvain University the feasibility of an Anglican-Catholic rapprochement. The ensuing "conversations", continuing intermittently during 1924 and 1925, drew sharp protest from the Catholic hierarchy of England

who cited the decree of Leo XIII pronouncing Anglican orders to be "absolutely null and void." Although nothing of substance seems to have come from the talks, they were not forgotten. Fifty years later in an open letter to the successor and protégée of Cardinal Mercier, Leo Cardinal Suenens, Pope Paul recalled the *Malines Conversations*, describing them as "the fruit of a rediscovered love".

Cardinal Mercier and Fr. Beauduin proceeded to turn their transforming talents to making Jesuit Louvain a center for advanced theological speculation while the paradoxical Pope Pius, as if to do penance for having given his consent for the *Malines Conversations*, sat down to write what would turn out to be the last solemn pronouncement to issue from the Vatican on the question of the uniqueness of Catholicism as the one, true faith. *Mortalium Animos* was a clear condemnation of the theses which the *Conversations* had promoted. "Let these separated children return to the Apostolic See established in this city by the princes of the apostles, Peter and Paul, who consecrated with their blood this root and matrix of the Catholic Church; not indeed with the idea or hope that the Church will abandon the integrity of the faith and bear their errors, but to subject themselves to its teaching authority and rule... Never has the Apostolic See permitted its subjects to take part in assemblies of non-Catholics. There is but one way in which the unity of the Churches can be fostered and that is by furthering the return to the true Church of Christ by those who have separated from it."

## *Quelling the French*

Nearly as soon as Benedict XV's condemnation, of the *Sodalitium* became known, French anti-Modernists could be found regrouping in several organizations, particularly in the already flourishing *Action Française*. Founded by two prominent *literati*, the parliamentarian and essayist, Leon Daudet and the journalist Charles Maurras, *l'Action* rejected the liberal dogma of separation of Church and State, advocating instead the creation of a Catholic State, preferably monarchist, with a corporative economic structure. Like the earlier *Sodalitium, l'Action Française* was destined to fall under the papal axe.

The story of the condemnation is a bizarre one. How, it has been asked, could Pius XI, who had so recently based his encyclical, *Quas Primas,* on the same traditional values *l'Action* promoted, turn against a movement so in line with his own way of thinking? How could he put on the Index of books Catholics were told not to read, the works of Charles Maurras whom he had praised publicly as "the most wonderful defender of the Faith"?

In several recently published memoirs of the time we find evidence of sordid intrigue. Already in 1950 Maurras had written from prison, "We now have proof that many copies of my paper were falsified before being given to the Pope to read. How otherwise could he have read my paper for months on end to come up with obnoxious material which the most ob-

jective readers never found, virtual enormities against us?"

The full dregs of the story came to light only after Maurras died at the age of 84, having spent the last nine years of his life in solitary confinement, a victim of General de Gaulle's post-war political purge. In 1974 a biography of Inspector Bony, the real-life "Inspector Maigret" of the 1920's, was published by his son. Writing a review of the book in the Rome daily, *Il Tempo,* Aldo de Quarto stated "In Rome in 1925 those heirs to Cardinal Rampolla and the *Sillon,* headed by the Vatican Secretary of State Pietro Gasparri, had long been putting pressure on Pope Pius XI to condemn Charles Maurras, whose publications were giving no peace to Freemasonry. Vatican pressure was being seconded by pressure from the French government."

At this point Cardinal Mercier of the *Malines Conversations* re-enters the picture. Early in 1926, as part of his program for restructuring Louvain University, he invited liberal-minded sociologists from all over Europe to come to Brussels to formulate what he called the Social Code of Malines, a kind of constitution for his newly organized Institute of Philosophy, a body destined to become a world center for radical Catholic thought.

Taking advantage of the presence of so many scholars, Mercier caused a questionnaire to circulate among the French-speaking Association of Belgian Youth which he had founded the year before. The key question: whom do you consider to be the greatest living Catholic teacher? Overwhelmingly the answer was "Charles Maurras".

The philosophers were alarmed. With Maurras' outstanding appeal to youth, would not this French super patriot be on his way to heading a successful revolution such as had already taken place in Italy? Maurras' enemies in Church and State closed ranks. In an effort to keep the affair confined to France, Secretary Gasparri ordered the Nuncio in Paris to find a French bishop willing to act as a front for a repressive operation. Cardinal Charest of Rennes was indignant when approached, "Strike Maurras, the greatest anti-Bolshevist in the country?" Said the Archbishop of Paris, Cardinal Dubois, "Don't count on me. I'm one of the directors of *l'Action Française".*

Losing patience with Vatican efforts, French Premier Poincaré decided to act on his own. He had his man, Cardinal Andrieu, Archbishop of Bordeaux whom Inspector Bony's men had lately caught red-handed in a major diamond smuggling operation. The affair had been hushed up on payment of a huge fine but when Andrieu got word to attack Maurras he was quick to obey. On April 25, 1926, precisely on the sixteenth anniversary of Pius X's condemnation of *Sillon,* the Archbishop of Bordeaux issued a widely published open letter of accusation against Charles Maurras and *l'Action Française.* De Quarto writes, "Members were accused of being exclusively political rather than spiritual Catholics, profaners of virtue, advocates of slavery, paganism and atheism."

All France was stunned. While the real atheists, pagans and Marxists hooted with laughter as they read the letter over coffee along the boulevards, sincere religious writers, even staunch progressives like the Dominican editors of *Temps Prisént* forcefully objected to what they called "a letter of calumny containing the gravest errors."

Unable to believe the Andrieu accusations, Pope Pius ordered Gasparri to provide him with the Maurras newspaper for daily reading. What he was provided with, however, was daily listening to reading. When De Quarto was writing in 1974, this bit of information was not available to him. We now know that the Pope, in perfect trust, allowed his private secretary Fr. (later Cardinal) Confalonieri to read the morning papers to him, as the Cardinal related in an interview in the Italian press some years later. After three months of listening to Fr. Confalonieri's version of Maurras' articles, Pius XI had had enough. On December 20 he issued a solemn decree ordering Catholics to abandon *l'Action Française* under pain of excommunication.

Four days later, on Christmas Eve, the condemned paper appeared carrying the banner headline, "NON POSSUMUS!" *L'Action Française* could neither abandon the faith nor abandon France. Wrote Maurras, "In the situation France finds herself today the destruction of *l'Action Française* is a political, not a religious act. Were we to submit, our fatherland would find itself defenseless. Hard as it is, if we are not to betray our country, our only response has to be WE CANNOT!"

In the politically precarious 1930's young Maurras followers fought Communist youth in the streets of Paris, while now and then a strange funeral procession was seen with laymen assumed to be excommunicated, bearing the crucifix and leading the prayers as a line of mourners approached church doors that remained closed.

Correspondent Aldo de Quarto was writing his review of the Bony biography at the height of the international media furor over the "rebellion" of Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre and he concluded his article admitting to an acute sense

of malaise, "Yesterday and today, who is it over there on the other side of the Tiber in Rome who manages to maneuver against everything that has the odor or the sound of tradition, everything that we call today 'on the Right'? Yesterday against Charles Maurras, today against Marcel Lefebvre. What are the mysteries of this Vatican?"

## *Quelling the Mexicans*

As the drama of Catholic transformation continues, bewilderment over Vatican mysteries can only deepen for those who see each major event in twentieth century Church history as separate in itself. Seen as a consistent line of effort meant to push forward a new kind of religion, major events can be taken to move in coherent sequence.

Seen thus, the crushing of *l'Action Française* was a logical gesture. If the Perfect Society was to be superseded by a new kind of Christianity, then ardor for the old verities would have to be dissipated. Of gravest concern to the progressives was *l'Action's* advocacy of a Catholic State. They remembered with distaste Pius X's admonition, "It is an absolutely false thesis and an extremely dangerous error to think that Church and State should be separated. Such a

thesis is in obvious negation of the supernatural order. It limits the action of the State to the sole purpose of public welfare in this life and does not occupy itself in any way with their more profound welfare, which is eternal happiness, that which is prepared for them after this so brief life."

Even before the French troubles had been settled the Vatican found itself confronted with another upsurge of the old faith, this time nine thousand miles from Rome. In Mexico the unexpected spelling out and application of drastic anti-religious laws, alleged to be contained in the Constitution of 1917, exploded into full-scale civil war. During the next three years tens of thousands of peasant farmers, workers, townsfolk and students would face federal troops to fight and die to the cry, *"Viva Cristo Rey!"* At the height of the conflict the rebels, scornfully dubbed "*Cristeros"* by the government, numbered forty thousand men with a corresponding officer corps. There were no uniforms, no pay, often no food and thanks to a strict embargo on the sale of arms by the United States, few weapons to fight with.

It was a layman's religious war. Not more than seven priests are known to have taken an active part. Laymen fought in defense of their bishops, even though the bishops had closed the churches and fled the country nearly to a man. Persuaded that the enactment of the so-called Calles Laws would mean the asphyxiation of Catholicism, the hierarchy had telegraphed Cardinal Gasparri in Rome for permission to close the Churches. Permission came and suddenly there were no more Masses, no more sacraments. Reaction among the people was immediate. Poor farmers left the fields to volunteer, maid servants banded together

to defy the water cannon of Mexico City police for the right to pray together and women of every social class throughout the country formed an underground league dedicated to Joan of Arc, enforcing on themselves a remarkable vow of secrecy in order to raise money, undertake intelligence, collect and serve food to the fighting men, while law students, some of them hardly more than adolescents, faced government firing squads. It was spontaneous collaboration on a national scale not experienced in all of Latin America before or since.

From the very beginning of the Mexican troubles two contrasting signals were coming from the Vatican. There was the sympathetic emotional reaction of Pius XI. After listening in private audience to the tragic accounts of the Bishops of Durango, Leon and Tamaulipas, he sat down to write the encyclical *Iniquis Afflictisquae.* Clearly overcome by what he had heard of the deaths by firing squad he wrote, "With rosary in hand and the cry *'Viva Cristo Rey!'* on their lips, these young students are going voluntarily to their deaths. What a spectacle of holiness for the whole world!"

Feeling was considerably more restrained at the office of the Vatican Secretary of State. After a lengthy exposition of events in Mexico, Msgr. Gonzalez Valencia of Durango, one of the few Mexican bishops who stood up publicly for the *Cristeros,* was astounded to hear Cardinal Gasparri express skepticism about the seriousness of the rebel movement. The Mexican could only retort, "Eminence, some people are refusing to give us aid because they doubt the seriousness of our cause and others say our movement is not serious because we get no aid. This is a vicious circle that must be broken." He pleaded in vain.

The French *Charge d'Affaires* in Mexico City wrote confidentially to Foreign Minister Briand at the Quai d'Orsay," Gasparri is exhausted by a stream of Mexican prelates with their strident orthodoxy and their fulminating anathemas. He continuously urges them to come to some agreement with their government, to compromise with President Calles."

Indeed, pitting Italian subtlety against Spanish intransigence, Cardinal Gasparri worked assiduously to dampen the *Cristero* fire. He advised members of the Mexican hierarchy to refuse encouragement to the fighters. He alerted the bishops of the United States to refuse all appeals for economic aid. The student leader, René Capistrán Garza, has left a pathetic account of his attempt to raise funds among Catholics of the United States.

In an open second-hand Studebaker in the dead of winter he and a bilingual companion made their way to Texas armed with letters of recommendation to bishops and regional commanders of the Knights of Columbus. Stopping first in Corpus Christi, they stood waiting for the bishop to read their credentials. Then they told their story. Concluding, they heard words they could scarcely believe, "Nothing doing, sorry." In Galveston the bishop took a ten dollar bill out of his pocket and handed it to them. Houston, Dallas, Little Rock brought hardly enough to pay for their gasoline at 1926 prices. Then in the prosperous German diocese of St. Louis the bishop gave them one hundred dollars of his own. But at that point the Studebaker broke down and in order to repair it the youths had to pawn an heirloom gold watch and a new pistol. Meeting constant rejection, they drove through sleet and snow to Indianapolis, Dayton, Pittsburgh and finally to the great diocese of Boston, already famed for its covey of Irish Catholic millionaires.

Cardinal O'Connell received their letters and listened to

their tale. Then he made his contribution. It took the form of advice, "I exhort you and your people to suffer in patience the trials God has sent you." He added that if either of them felt like abandoning their project in order to look for jobs in Boston, he would be happy to give them letters of recommendation.

When two months later René and his friend José, were home in Mexico, their hope was to soar for a last time. The Texas oilman William F. Buckley notified them that he had persuaded his good friend Nicholas Brady, Knight of St. Gregory and Duke of the Papal Court, to donate one million dollars to the cause. Arriving in New York after the long train journey Capistrán found that the Vatican's *non placet* had got to Brady ahead of him. One can only conclude that to have turned men like Brady and O'Connell away from helping so Catholic a cause as that of the *Cristeros,* the Vatican message must have been not only peremptory but noxious.

Yet, in spite of unimaginable poverty, sacrifice and suffering, little by little, battle by battle, *Cristero* fortunes were rising and popular favor was growing to the extent that by the spring of 1929 victory was in sight. Historians agree that then and there the government of Plutarco Elias Calles, faced with overwhelming adhesion to the rebel cause, would have found it expedient to come to terms with the *Cristeros.* It was the moment when Mexican bishops, returning from self-imposed exile, could have claimed the rights so many men had died for.

However, it was not the Mexican bishops but Cardinal Gasparri who took the initiative. Alerted by the threat of a *Cristero* victory, the Vatican Secretary of State began to pull strings he had long been fingering. Having found two bishops who were willing to compromise, Msgr. Ruiz Flores of Morelia and Msgr. Diaz Barreto of Tabasco, he put them in touch with the Apostolic Delegate and the National Catholic Welfare Conference in Washington. It was soon

arranged that Dwight Morrow, a Protestant, and Ambassador to Mexico from the United States, would act as sponsor for the Vatican peace plan.

Inviting the two bishops to ride to Mexico in his private railroad car, Mr. Morrow also arranged for them to leave the train when an unscheduled stop was made on his order a few miles before reaching Mexico City. It was important that the negotiations were not thought of as an American undertaking. Once in town Ruiz Flores and Diaz Barreto were deposited in the mansion of the banker Agustin Legorreta, where they were to remain virtually incommunicado for twelve days. Meanwhile several other bishops had returned to Mexico and were frantic for news of what was afoot, however all their efforts to speak with the two at the Legorreta house were in vain.

Finally on October 11, 1929 papers were signed which amounted to nothing less than the unconditional surrender of a victorious army. In the words of the Bishop of Huehuetla to the faculty of Louvain University a month later, "The Mexican people, preserving the pure, integral faith of their fathers, look on the Pope as the Vicar of Christ on earth. Knowing this fact the enemies of Christ were very astute to betake themselves to Rome in order to break the immovable wall of armed resistance. Very soon they had the satisfaction of seeing the people surrender their arms at the first signal from the Pope. Those in the government who consented to a settlement, offered all kinds of promises verbally but afterward never removed a single comma from the monstrous laws that have wounded Holy Church in Mexico and strangled the most sacred rights of men and of society."

Churches, it is true, were reopened to a great thunder of clanging bells and general rejoicing. However it was not the

government that had closed .the churches in the first place. Ostensibly nothing was changed. There was still no religious education in the schools and monasteries, convents and seminaries were to remain closed. Foreign priests continued to be forbidden to exercise ministries within the country and no priest might wear clerical garb or enjoy ordinary civil status, including the right to vote. Exiled for life were the two or three bishops who had championed the *Cristeros* and the blanket amnesty promised to rebel fighters was to result in a systematic liquidation by assassins' bullets of leaders of the movement during the coming years.

Paralleling its canonical sanctions against members of *I'Action Française,* the Gasparri Vatican threatened with suspension any priest who administered sacraments to a Catholic who was still bent on resistance. "As a consequence", in the words of Msgr. Gonzalez Valencia, "the traditional esteem of the Mexican for his bishops has been completely destroyed, as the faithful see the inexplicable indulgence given by the bishops to the persecutors and their no less inexplicable severity, even cruelty, to the sincere defenders of the faith. And I warn you, Eminence", he was addressing the new Secretary of State, Eugenio Pacelli, "these charges against the bishops have now begun to touch on the Holy See!"

The role of Achille Ratti, Pope Pius XI, in the Mexican tragedy was apparently much like his role in the French affair. Msgr. Manriquez, the new Bishop of Durango, attempted to explain it, "What we Mexicans must remember about His Holiness is that the reason he acted mistakenly is because of enormous pressure put on him by individuals determined to get their way. In the end those

intriguers persuaded him that these *"arreglos",* which we all know resolved absolutely nothing, were the only way to obtain freedom for the Mexican Church."

To this day the treaty has never been given a more dignified name than "los arreglos ", the arrangements. There is a report from Cardinal Baggiani to the effect that, on finally learning what the arrangements actually amounted to, Pope Pius wept.

## *Heading Toward War*

By the year 1930 the five leading transformers of the Catholic Church had become effectively three, Giacomo Della Chiesa having died eight years earlier and Pietro Gasparri retiring after sixteen years as Vatican Secretary of State.

Coming on the scene from the Nunciature in Germany was Eugenio Pacelli, 53, and soon to join him, Giovanni Battista Montini, 33. As for Angelo Roncalli, then 49, his routine diplomatic reports were reaching Rome from the Nunciature in Istanbul where, it was said, he had been exiled by Pope Pius XI for having inserted into his

theological teaching at Lateran University theories of anthroposophist Rudolf Steiner.

Returning to Rome in January 1930 to receive the Cardinal's hat and his appointment as Secretary of State, Msgr. Pacelli was to find the Vatican enjoying a new status. Inside the palaces there was business as usual but the ground on which the palaces, the churches, gardens and chapels stood had become a sovereign and separate State.

Letters dating from the early 1920's have come to light which show Charles Maurras urging Benito Mussolini, as Prime Minister of Italy, to "establish religious peace by an historic gesture". Maurras was referring to the state of cold war existing between the heirs to Italian insurgency of the last century and the "prisoner in the Vatican", Pius XI. There followed a few cautious feelers on both sides and then an event took place unprecedented since the troops of Cardona broke through the Porta Pia on a Rome absorbed in the First Vatican Council: Cardinal Merry del Val, still in his early sixties but long out of the mainstream of Vatican power, was invited to participate in the official ceremonies of the Fascist Government to commemorate the six-hundredth anniversary of the death of St. Francis of Assisi, patron saint of Italy. It may have been the Cardinal's enthusiasm for reconciliation that finally moved Pius XI to begin negotiations. In any case, on February 11, 1929, Cardinal Gasparri and Benito Mussolini signed the Lateran Treaty and a Concordat between the new Vatican City State and the Kingdom of Italy.

The agreement gave the Church sovereignty over 108 acres in the heart of Rome, thus creating the City State. Catholicism became the State religion of Italy. Crucifixes went up on the walls of all public buildings from schoolrooms to police stations across the country and religious education became obligatory in the nation's schools.

Both the clergy and the hierarchy received certain privileges in legal matters. In Rome slums were cleared to make a wide approach to the Basilica of St. Peter while a generous financial settlement was accorded the Holy See by the Italian State as reparation for the material losses which had occurred in 1870.

Mussolini's historic gesture of peace, although generally praised at the time, won him little lasting gratitude. "To think of what my husband did for the Church!" widow Rachele Mussolini would sigh to a French reporter many years later and Cardinal Krol of Philadelphia, called to Rome in 1981 to help sort out the Holy See's alarming financial problems, declared, "The only thing that keeps the (Vatican's financial) ship afloat is the Patrimony of the Holy See, that reimbursement made by Italy at the signing of the Lateran Treaty. It's not an inexhaustible resource."

Scarcely had ink dried on the Concordat when young Fr. Gianbattista Montini, chaplain of the Rome sector of the Federation of Catholic university students, the FUCI, managed to destabilize it. From early childhood he had lived the excitement of politics, his mother having been as much an activist as his father. Watching the Popular Party (later renamed Christian Democrat) taking shape virtually in the family living-room, he had followed each successive election of his father as deputy for Brescia to the national parliament up to 1924 when Italy became a one-party State. After that year, like the forbears of Eugenio Pacelli, the Montini,s went into banking. At a time when very few Italians were antagonistic to Fascism, the Montini's were notable exceptions, and by the time the Concordat was signed they had experienced five years of political frustration. Not unexpectedly, Fr. Montini looked on his

assignment with the FUCI as a chance to make a stand. He decided to refuse to obey a government order to let his students be incorporated into the national youth organization. Since the authorities, in strict conformity with the provisions of the Concordat, were providing Catholic chaplains for all sections of the Balilla formation, they looked on the holding back of Montini's Rome group as not only unnecessary but divisive. Ordered to join up or disband, Montini claimed persecution and the foreign press, as is their custom, took up the cry. At the height of the rumpus, the Vatican issued a fiery anti-government encyclical which, for quick availability to the press, was given out, not in the usual Latin, but in Italian. *Non Abbiamo Bisogno,* according to a former FUCI member, the senior statesman, Giulio Andreotti, was written, not by Pope Pius XI, but by his new Secretary of State, Eugenio Pacelli. The longed-for religious peace was shattered. To salvage what it could of the hopes of 1929, and in the face of worldwide incrimination, the Mussolini government permitted the survival of the FUCI, provided it confined itself to religious activities.

A mere six weeks before the appearance of *Non Abbiamo Bisogno,* the Pope himself had issued what has come to be seen as a pro-Fascist encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno.* Intended as a tribute to Pope Leo XIII on the fortieth anniversary of his outstanding encyclical on labor relations, *Rerum Novarum,* the new statement demonstrated the fact that Catholic social doctrine is more in harmony with the corporative industrial system being developed at that time in Italy than it is with the basically class-struggle structure of conventional capitalism.

In the eyes of Secretary Pacelli Fr. Montini's triumph against the Italian government had won him his spurs. Very soon after the worldwide media furor, Pacelli brought Montini into his office to begin an intimate working association that was to last for twenty-three years. Of the

five Italians who directed the changing of the Catholic Church, the two who would prove to be the most effective had become a team. A generation apart, they had everything in common. Both of them had been born into Vatican-ambitious families. Both of them had spent their childhood in forced isolation with scant opportunity either for normal association with their peers or for classroom instruction. Their careers were notably Vatican nurtured. Pope Leo himself had put the young Pacelli into the hands of Cardinal Rampolla and another Pope, Benedict XV, would consecrate him to the episcopate in a private ceremony in the Sistine Chapel. As for Giovanni Montini, he was received immediately on ordination by Pius XI who appointed him to the Nunciature in Warsaw with the words, "You are the most promising young priest in Rome" and this in spite of the fact that it would be seventeen years before Montini was to obtain a degree in Canon Law. Indeed he had not received either the title or a consecration to the episcopate when Pius XII made him Pro-Secretary of State in 1954.

As international political tension mounted during the 1930's. Secretary Pacelli and Fr. Montini found themselves increasingly committed to one side. According to Andreotti, not only was *Non Abbiamo Bisogno* the work of Pacelli but also the vehement *Mit Brennender Sorge,* the other vernacular encyclical, this one aimed against the government of Germany. The late Cardinal Siri of Genoa has noted that the original drafts of the latter document show numerous corrections in Pacelli's hand. The fact that Pius XI's anti-Marx encyclical *Divini Redemptoris* appeared just five days after Pacelli's anti-German *Mit Brennender Sorge* gives one the impression that once more Pope and Secretary were carrying on two separate battles quite out of tune with each other. *Divini Redemptoris* with its most quoted line, "Communism

is intrinsically evil", was destined to present serious problems for Pope Pacelli in his relations with American Catholics when Russia entered the Second World War.

With Achille Ratti now in his eightieth year, Cardinal Pacelli is known to have taken virtual charge of the Vatican. Aware of the fact that Pius wanted to receive Adolf Hitler in audience on a forthcoming state visit to Italy, he whisked the aged Pope off to Castel Gandolfo. Then, finding that the German Chancellor had expressed a particular wish to see. the greatest Michaelangelo frescoes, he locked the Sistine Chapel. There was acute embarrassment on the part of Italian authorities when, without warning, the escorting party was confronted with a sign, "closed for repairs".

In March 1938, when German troops entered Austria, Cardinal Innitzer of Vienna was caught up in the all-night celebration along the Ringstrasse and wound up giving his blessing to the ecstatic throngs. As soon as word reached the Vatican, Cardinal Pacelli is said to have expressed "real bitterness". He promptly called Innitzer to Rome and ordered him to make a public retraction and, although the order came, not from the Pope but only the Secretary of State, the Austrian complied. In that year, 1938, unnoticed by all but an intellectual elite, Civiltá *Cattólica,* the Jesuit review considered to be the semi-official voice of the Vatican, suddenly left off its warnings about the danger to the Church of Freemasonry, particularly in its declared program to create what it called a "new world order".

According to Giulio Andreotti, the two lengthy international tours of Cardinal Pacelli were taken entirely on the latter's own initiative, rather than on orders of the Pope. As Secretary of State he attended the International Eucharistic Congress of 1936 in Buenos Aires and the

same year found him in the United States where he visited twelve ecclesiastical provinces, held consultations with seventy-nine bishops, called on scores of religious institutions, seminaries and hospitals, topping off the tour as a guest of President Roosevelt at Hyde Park. The two were reported to have "hit it off splendidly", Roosevelt going on in subsequent exchange of correspondence to address Pope Pacelli as "my old and good friend". In New York the future Pius XII was the house guest of Myron C. Taylor who, despite the fact that attainment of the Thirty-Third Degree in Freemasonry was well known, was to be welcomed as Washington's Special Envoy to the Vatican during the war years. The spectacular American tour of Pacelli in 1936 was stage-managed by Archbishop Spellman of Boston and was to make of the Secretary of State a far more important figure in the public eye than the studious and rather stolid person of the reigning Pope.

On the religious front in the mid-1930's the Pacelli-Montini partnership could look back at the two major strokes of the decade, before the suppressions in France and Mexico, with certain misgivings. If the brave new Church was able to boast nothing but negation, it would appear as rigid and intolerant as the old. Along with destruction must come construction. Needed now was new spiritual excitement.

Causing the greatest excitement in scholarly circles at the moment was a privately printed essay entitled *Le Sens Humain* by the French Jesuit paleontologist, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. Foreshadowing his *Phenomenon of Man,* the paper offered a wild leap into evolution-based eschatology which the creators of a new kind of Christianity might well have been tempted to adopt and adapt. In many ways it paralleled the more colorful deviations of pre-Pius X Modernism. Admittedly under the Teilhard spells themselves, the reformers decided against

inviting the Catholic masses to share in the French Jesuit's fantasies. Experience had shown them that the average believer expects a measure of realism along with his piety.

Dismissed although the Teilhard speculations were, they did not draw Vatican condemnation. It was later supposed that certain passages in the Pacelli encyclical *Humani Generis* were meant as reproof of the Jesuit's evolutionism, however the papal document named no names and, speaking on the centenary of Teilhard's birth in 1970, Cardinal Casaroli lauded "the amazing impact of his research, the brilliance of his personality, the richness of his thought, his powerful poetic insight, his acute perception of the dynamic of creation, his vast vision of the evolution of the world".

In the 1930's it was not the Vatican but his own order, the Society of Jesus, that forbade Teilhard de Chardin to publish any religious works during his lifetime and for many years the Society forbade him to lecture. However, soon after becoming, Pope, Eugenio Pacelli persuaded the Jesuits to lift the ban so that a series of Teilhard lectures could take place in German-Occupied Paris during the latter years of the war.

While the theories of Teilhard de Chardin attained a certain vogue in the limited world of academia, it was the thoughts of another Frenchman, a layman, which, once they had been embraced by the Vatican, were to become the spiritual food the transformers had been looking for.

Jacques Maritain, a professor of philosophy at the Catholic Institute of Paris, had been born into a Protestant family. During his student days at the Sorbonne he converted to Catholicism and became a member of *l'Action Française*. In 1926, astonished at the sudden Vatican clamp down on that organization, he went to Rome where, thanks to his

prestige as a Thomist scholar, he was able to talk privately both with the Pope and the Secretary of State. While the purpose of his journey had been to ask how the Maurras condemnation had been possible, he must have wound up expounding a set of theological ideas that had been going around in his head for some time. He left Rome with an assignment, whether from Pius XI or, as is more likely, from Secretary Gasparri, to gather his theories on what he called "integral humanism" into a book. Ten years later the Church-shaking Maritain work appeared. Nearly simultaneously with the first French edition, an Italian version came out with a glowing introduction by its translator, Giovanni Battista Montini.

The Maritain thesis calls for a basic shift in ecclesiology, that is, in the way the Church looks at itself, at its function and identity. His book prepared the way for the great paradigm change to be found in Pius XII's encyclical *Mystici Corporis*. However, because it is the pope, not the theologians, who actuate the acceptance of new beliefs, the Maritain message, already circulating freely in academic circles, had to wait for a papal encyclical before it could become part of the lives of the faithful. In 1936 Achille Ratti was still Pope.

Integral Humanism, not unlike the theories of Teilhard de Chardin, envisions religions of every kind converging toward a single human ideal in a world civilization wherein all men will be reconciled in justice, love and peace. Friendship among men will guide all life toward a mysterious accomplishment of the Gospel. As the French theologian Henri Le Caron explains, "Integral Humanism is a universal fraternity among men of good will belonging to different religions or to none, even those who reject the idea of a creator. It is within this framework that the

Church should exercise a leavening influence without imposing itself and without demanding that it be recognized as the one, true Church. The cement of this fraternity is twofold, the virtue of doing good and an understanding grounded in respect for human dignity.

"This idea of universal fraternity", continues Le Caron, "is neither new nor original. It was already advanced by the philosophers of the eighteenth century and by the French revolutionaries of 1789. It is also the fraternity beloved of Freemasons and Marxists. What distinguishes Maritain's humanism is the role it allocates to the Church. Within the universal fraternity the Church is to be the inspiration and the Big Sister, and it goes without saying that if she is to win the sympathy of her little brothers, she must neither be intransigent nor authoritarian. She must learn how to make religion acceptable. She must be practical rather than dogmatic."

That Fr. Montini's early enthusiasm for Maritain stayed with him throughout his life is described by the novelist and one-time Jesuit, Malachi Martin, "The Integral Humanism of Paul VI permeated the entire policy of his pontificate. What the philosophy has to say is that all men are naturally good, that they will respond to be good and reject the evil if they are shown the difference. The function of the Church is merely to bear witness by service to men in today's world where a new society is being born."

Implementation of the Maritain doctrine can be recognized in document after document emerging from the Second Vatican Council and in most of the official exhortations and encyclicals that followed, even though at the time Maritain's book first appeared, the Council was still a quarter of a century in the future. The thesis can be felt as a kind of ground bass beating right through to our time. It was implicit in the warm welcome Pius XII accorded Maritain

when he came to Rome as the first post-war French Ambassador to the Holy See, in the very frequent public homage by Paul VI, in the constant study meetings and symposia dedicated to his work that have proliferated throughout the Catholic academic world and by the glowing tribute paid to Maritain by John Paul II on the centenary of the philosopher's birth. By the end of the turbulent thirties Vatican acceptance of Integral Humanism made it only a question of how to pass it on to the faithful once the old Pope died.

In the third month of the last year of the decade Eugenio Pacelli was elected to the papacy and in the ninth month the Second World War began.

## *Digging Deeper*

War or no war, the Catholic revolution, under the impetus of its newly found theological boost, was to leap ahead during the early 1940's. In his first encyclical, *Summi Pontificatus,* the new Pope offered a correction to his predecessor's *Quas Primas* with its plea for a return to traditional Church-State relations. Instead of looking to authority from above, from "Christ the King" as Pope Ratti had defined it, Pacelli insisted the basis for government should be human solidarity. The British historian, W. A. Purdy comments, *"Summi Pontificatus* foreshadows that interest in

the ideal world community which would figure increasingly in the Pope's pronouncements over the succeeding twenty years". Although muted under traditional phraseology there was implicit in the text the Maritain thesis calling for a coming together of the world's religions. *Summi Pontificatus* foreshadowed John Paul 11's Day of Peace at Assisi.

In the way of practical application of the thesis that had been timidly promoted as "conversations" between Anglicans and Catholics two decades before, ecumenism now moved into full-fledged symposia. In Rome a gathering called "Love and Charity" took place under the auspices of the Holy See. The presiding Cardinal, Lovatelli, called for an "end to useless and divisive polemics in favor of love for our brothers in Christ". Effectively it was a call for heart to replace mind, sentiment to replace sense. Thus discussions over such questions as the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist gave way to the question of whether Protestants and Catholics felt affection for one another. Meanwhile Jesuits entered the new public forum sponsoring the lectures of global-Church enthusiast, Fr. Charles Boyer at their Gregorian University. In thirty-six years of teaching there it is estimated that Fr. Boyer influenced something like five thousand elite candidates for the priesthood with his passion for ecumenism.

As the war raged more furiously than ever, spreading now to the Pacific, occupied Paris offered an oasis of curious tranquility. The dress designer Christian Dior, thanks to generous allowances of lavish materials granted him by the German authorities, was presenting his soft and flowing "new look", while Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, thanks to the sympathy of Pius XII, was expounding his soft and flowing new way to be Catholic.

He exulted to a friend, “I now have so many friends in good, strategic positions that I am absolutely without fear for the future.” At the same time word reached him from occupied Brussels that one of his disciples, Fr. Jean Monteuil, was addressing a convention of philosophers and theologians at Louvain University on some of the more fanciful Teilhard theories. “The revolution”, declared Monteuil, “demands new techniques but that is not enough. What must take place is reclassification. All the concepts of humanity must be called into question.”

Occupied Paris was to become the milieu of Msgr. Angelo Roncalli. As the war drew to a close and ideological purges of the defeated began, Pius XII, who had been in close touch with Nuncio Roncalli in the Balkans over his project to get Polish Jews into British Palestine, was finding himself in urgent need of a trusted diplomat in order to confront a triumphant and vengeful General Charles de Gaulle.

The retreat from France of the German Army had left the Church in an awkward position. De Gaulle was accusing one hundred French bishops of having collaborated with the Germans and with the so-called “Vichy” government of Marèchal Pétain. Returning to France to take over as head of government, De Gaulle had been appalled to find himself unable to secure even one priest in all of Paris whom he considered sufficiently “anti-Fascist” to say Mass for him and his staff at the Elysée Palace. Finally his secretary, Claude Mauriac, a son of the novelist, came upon Fr. (later Cardinal) Jean Danièlou, immersed at the time in setting up an association of “Catholics of the Left”. De Gaulle was satisfied.

While ordinary French Catholics by the thousands met imprisonment or death, often in summary execution at the hands of the triumphant “Resistance”, smooth diplomacy

on the part of Msgr. Roncalli, Pius XII's new Apostolic Nuncio to France, managed to save all but two members of the French hierarchy from any punishment whatsoever. The message of the future Pope John to General de Gaulle was as remarkable as it was successful: "Wait! Let them be. We in the Vatican are engaged in creating an entirely new kind of Church, one that will be to your liking and we will see to it that the Bishops of France go along with us. Be patient!"

Not only was the General patient, he became notably cooperative by assigning Prof. Jacques Maritain to the Holy See as French Ambassador. The formulator of Integral Humanism had spent the war years in Canada, a refugee from Vichy France, because of his wife, Raissa's, Jewish origin. Teaching mainly in Toronto he had also been engaged as guest lecturer at several universities in the United States.

Rome at that time saw the founding of the Focolare Movement, a forerunner of both the "Charismatic Catholics" and the so-called "basic communities", the cell-like organizations in the parishes which would prove so effective in spreading Marxist "liberation theology" in Latin America. Today a worldwide organization, Focolare's early commitment to a "new priesthood" and a "new humanity" made it a rich font for progressivism. An early Focolare enthusiast was Countess Pacelli, sister of Pope Pius XII.

Meanwhile sacramental discipline was loosening. One of Pope Pacelli's first acts was to relax the rules for the sacrament of penance by reviving the permission granted during the First World War for general *versus* individual, absolution for soldiers about to go "over the top". Subsequently he extended the indult to include civilians in danger of aerial bombardment and finally to prisoners of war with language problems.

The liturgy was still in Latin, however the Dialogue Mass or *Missa Recitata* wherein responses were made by the congregation rather than by a server at the altar, was becoming so widespread in wartime Germany that Bishop Gröber of Freiburg-im-Breisgau expressed concern that "the eager insistence of neo-liturgists on laity participation is beginning to subtract from the sacrificial role of the priest."

Such complaints brought forth a papal response in the way of the encyclical *Mediator Dei* on the subject of the liturgy. Didier Bonneterre in his excellent study, *Le Mouvement Liturgique,* has high praise for the document which urges caution and prudence regarding liturgical reform. Then he laments, "However, I regret and I continue to regret that this beautiful piece of writing was accompanied by no concrete measures, no sanctions. Pius X had not been content with writing *Lamentabili,* he outlawed the *Sillon* and excommunicated Tyrell and Loisy." With its selections from St. Paul of such phrases as "Try everything; retain what is good", *Mediator Dei* was, in fact, taken by the neo-liturgists as a go-ahead for experimentation.

Meanwhile the Vatican approved a liturgical updating in the way of a new Latin translation of the *Psalms* for the Canonical Hours. Fr. Bonneterre remarks, "This version, very faithful to the Hebrew text, lacks all poetic feeling. It is full of words difficult to pronounce and impossible to sing to Gregorian melodies. It remains a witness to the lack of liturgical sensitivity on the part of Augustin Bea and his fellow Jesuits at the Biblicum."

The Pontifical Biblical Institute, known in Rome as the "Biblicum" had been founded by Pope Pius X as a center for the setting of orthodox norms in biblical research and interpretation at a time when the approved Vulgate translation of the Scriptures was under attack both from Protestant and Modernist Catholic exegetes. Toward the

end of the 1930's the Biblicum began to undergo rapid change as Secretary of State Pacelli brought to Rome an old friend from his Berlin and Munich days, Fr. Bea, Provincial for the Company of Jesus in Germany, asking Pius XI to make him head of the institution. In the end the Pope also accepted Bea as his confessor.

## *Safeguarding the Marxists*

Again and again in her long history the Roman Catholic Church reacted spontaneously to severe outside pressure. At each major attack She called a council so that in Episcopal assembly She could redefine and thus reaffirm Her identity. Such recourse was taken twenty-six times in nineteen hundred years. Then in the mid-1940's, to the sharpest blow since the Protestant revolt, namely, the advance across Europe of atheistic Communism, an advance which involved the subjugation of sixty-five million Roman Catholics, the Vatican registered no reaction whatsoever. Indeed Rome would wait seventeen years before calling a council and during the sessions of that council the question of Marxism was not only not discussed, discussing it was strictly forbidden.

The outcome of the Second World War entailed for the Church some of the most violent experiences in its history. Any business enterprise confronted with flood or fire would take immediate action, calling in its board of directors to assess damages and work out future strategy. If ever there was a time for a Pope to gather his chieftains around him it was the year 1946.

However, in a thick series of public appearances during that year Pius XII avoided all reference to Marxism. In his June address to the College of Cardinals, while "rejecting rivalries and groupings dictated solely by political and economic interests", he expressed confidence that "dangers on the Right and on the Left" could be avoided "in the light of the Church". He then went on to defend the remarkably one-sided stance he had maintained throughout the war saying, "We, as head of the Church refused to call Christians to a crusade." He had been careful, he said, in spite of pressures, "to insure that not one word of approval of the war against Russia was permitted to be said". As Hungarian Catholics drawn into the Sovietic vortex begged him for help, Pacelli urged "patience and endurance" because, he said, "the old oak can be buffeted but it cannot be uprooted." In the *Acta Apostolica,* the official catalogue of Pontifical speeches and acts, neither the word "communism" nor the word "socialism" can be found for twelve long crucial years, that is from 1937, the year following the Pacelli talks with President Roosevelt and 1949 when defeat of the Italian Christian Democrat Party by the Communist Party in upcoming national elections seemed imminent.

As for the crusade referred to by the Pope, in 1941 the French Cardinal Boudrillat had come to Rome to ask a papal blessing for the volunteer regiments of Frenchmen, Spaniards, Italians, Croatians, Hungarians and Slovenians, Catholics nearly to a man, who were setting out with the

German Army to conquer Soviet Russia or, as the Cardinal put it to the Pope, "to free the Russian people". Along with the volunteer "crusaders" went a sizeable contingent of Russian and Ukrainian-speaking priests, young graduates of the Russicum, Rome's Russian seminary, who hoped to open long closed churches along the way. Cardinal Boudrillat's expectations were speedily dashed by Pius XII who ordered the request for a blessing to be immediately retracted. In addition the Cardinal was to have no contact whatsoever with the press.

As the war dragged on there would be even stronger pressures on Pius XII to lend the weight of his office to resisting the advance of Marxism. By May 1943 Nuncio Roncalli was writing from Istanbul expressing "panic" at the new Soviet offensive. He had tried in vain, he said to find out from his recent visitor, Cardinal Spellman of New York, just how much Roosevelt had promised Stalin.

From Berne the Nuncio to Switzerland, Msgr. Bernardini, wrote to the Pope that the Swiss press, "up to now preoccupied with German hegemony in Europe, has suddenly begun to take account of a far greater, indeed mortal danger, that of Germany falling into the hands of the Soviets." Pleading for the Catholic majorities in Poland and Hungary, he urged the Pope to back any reasonable Allied peace initiative and to condemn the intransigent insistence of Roosevelt and the American Secretary of the Treasury, Morgenthau, that Germany must surrender unconditionally.

In March Cardinal Maglione, the Vatican Secretary of State, without, it must be assumed, the Pope's knowledge, was urging Britain's envoy to the Holy See to try to convince Prime Minister Churchill that the British Empire needed a non-Communist Germany in a stable Europe. Finally in April the Prime Minister of Hungary, Kallay,

came to the Vatican with a desperate plea to the Pope to put himself at the head of a peace initiative capable of halting the Soviet advance that was about to engulf the Christian peoples of Europe.

Pius XII, as he would boast in his 1946 message to the College of Cardinals, resisted every pressure, rejected every plea. And he gave his reason: "National Socialism has had a more ominous effect on the German people than has Marxism on the Russians. Only a total reversal of German policy, particularly those relating to the Jews, could make any move on the part of the Holy See possible."

A strange comparison to make when, in contrast to Soviet isolation in aggressive atheism, Germany and the Vatican were enjoying full diplomatic relations, when churches were not only open but, like Catholic schools and universities, subsidized by the German State. Adolf Hitler was never excommunicated nor was his autobiography, *Mein Kampf,* ever put on the *Index*.

The curious legend that Eugenio Pacelli was indifferent to the fate of European Jews had its origin in the thesis, "the silence of Pius XII", an invention of a German Protestant playwright, Rudolf Hochhuth, and a German Jewish journalist, Saul Friedlander, both writing, in the 1960's. That there had been a tragic silence, the twelve volumes of the *Acta Apostolica* attest, but the silence did not concern the Jews. On the contrary, as the Jesuit historian Robert Graham asserts "Pius XII was the greatest benefactor of the Jews in modern times."

Adolf Hitler had been Chancellor of Germany less than half a year when Secretary of State Pacelli was urging Pope Pius XI to give hospitality inside Vatican City to prominent Jews

who requested it. In 1937 coming into New York Harbor on the *Conte di Savoia,* Cardinal Pacelli requested the Captain to run up an improvised banner with the six-pointed star of the future state of Israel in honor, he said, of six hundred German Jews on board. A year later Catholics in Munich were astonished to see the *Torah* and other ritual objects being removed from the city's chief synagogue in the limousine of the Archbishop for safe keeping in the Episcopal palace and to learn that it had been the Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Pacelli in Rome, who had ordered the transfer. One of his last acts before becoming Pope was to notify American and Canadian bishops of his displeasure at the reluctance of Catholic universities and colleges in their countries to accept more European Jewish professors, scholars and scientists on their staffs and he looked to the bishops to remedy the situation.

As Pius XII, Pacelli understood early on the importance of Palestine to the Jewish mind. As soon as the news reached Rome of the German advance into Poland he was telegraphing his Nuncio, Paccini, in Warsaw to "try to organize Polish Jews for a passage to Palestine." Meanwhile in Istanbul, Msgr. Roncalli, asked to work at the halfway point where the Jews were to be given Catholic baptismal certificates in the hope the British would let them through, registered a forthright protest. "Surely", he wrote to Pius XII, "an attempt to revive the ancient Kingdoms of Judea and Israel is utopistic. Will it not expose the Vatican to accusations of support for Zionism?" The Secretary of State, Cardinal Maglione was hardly less troubled. "How", he asked the Pope, "can you justify historically, a criterion of bringing back a people to Palestine, a territory they left nineteen centuries ago? Surely there are more suitable places for the Jews to settle."

Years later, provoked by the Hochhuth accusations, Pope Paul VI permitted the opening of a certain section of the Vatican Archives to take place under the care of four Jesuit scholars. The American among them, Robert Graham, told the *Washington Post,* "I was stupefied by what I was reading. How could one explain action so contrary to the principle of neutrality?" He was finding that during the first months of the war the new Pope was himself writing the intensely anti-German texts beamed around the world by Vatican Radio. Although his personal involvement was not discovered at the time, the sensational nature of the tracts were so strong that they brought vigorous protest from the German Ambassador to the Holy See and even from the Polish bishops themselves. The broadcasts were suspended to the chagrin of London which lost what Fr. Graham calls "a formidable source of propaganda."

Pius XII then turned his attention to setting up his Catholic Refugee Committee in Rome, putting it in charge of his secretary, Fr. Leiber S.J. and his housekeeper, Mother Pasqualina. Msgr. Georges Roche in his *Pie XII Avant I'Histoire* says this committee paved the way for thousands of European Jews to enter the United States as "Catholics", providing them with a regular and efficient documentation service, baptismal certificates, financial aid and arrangements abroad. The French historian estimates that by 1942 over one million Jews were being housed in convents and monasteries throughout Europe on Vatican directives. According to the British historian, Derek Holmes, Jews, as well as partisans of the underground guerrilla movements, were dressed as monks and nuns and taught to sing plain chant. The Pope himself set an example by taking care of some fifteen thousand Jews and

anti-government Italians at Castel Gandolfo, as well as a thousand in Vatican City, among them the Italian Socialist leader, Pietro Nenni.

St. Francis' little hilltown of Assisi became the chief center for the printing of baptismal certificates, as Pius XII proceeded to set up the complex known as the Cittadella, a kind of "think tank" for new Church projects which would one day organize Pope John Paul II's "Day of Peace". Throughout the Second World War papal permission was given for synagogue services to be held in the lower level of the Basilica of St, Francis. It was here, at the Cittadella, that Msgr. Bugnini did most of his work on a "New Mass".

Even as Nuncio Roncalli, despite his protest, was knuckling down to provide fake baptismal certificates, Cardinal Tisserant and his Joint Distribution Committee were facilitating Jewish emigration under the very nose of the Vichy government. Msgr. Roche, who acted as the Cardinal's secretary, describes an underground printing press at Nice which was protected by the Mayor of the City and the Archbishop where 1895 false identity cards, 136 false work permits, 1230 false birth certificates, 480 false demobilization letters and 950 false baptismal certificates were produced before the operation was discovered.

In a spectacular gesture Pius ordered the papal seal to be engraved on the front of Rome's main synagogue, prior to the arrival of German troops, while in Hungary Fr. Montini was working to protect 800,000 Jews, provided they submit to mass baptism. In neighboring Czechoslovakia Jewish families like that of Madeleine Albright would enjoy the same privilege, something, which the American Secretary of State told the press, caused her "great pain".

To the continued amazement of the Jesuit scholars, they came upon archived documentation of Pius XII's personal involvement in a plot to overthrow Hitler. In January 1940 the Pope was approached by an emissary of a certain clique of German generals who asked him to tell the British government that they would undertake to "remove" Hitler if they were sure Britain would come to terms with a moderate German regime. Pius promptly carried out the mission through Sir Francis D'Arcy Osborne, London's envoy to the Holy See. The offer was turned down. Three months later, on May 6, 1940, thanks to his friend Josef Mueller, a German double agent, the Pope was able to give Osborne details of the forthcoming German advance on the West, the so-called *Blitzkrieg,* urging him to pass the word on to the governments of Holland, Belgium and France. All three were later reported to have been incredulous.

Papal preference for one side during the war hit a major snag when the Allied side became the Soviet side. By that time Hitler's so-called Fortress Europe had become overwhelmingly Catholic. With the incorporation of the Germans of Catholic Austria, Alsace-Lorraine, the Saarland, Sudetenland and German-Occupied Poland, the Third Reich had an enormous Catholic majority while its allies, Italy, Slovakia, Slovenia and Croatia were entirely Catholic, Hungary mainly so. Occupied France was cooperating and Catholic Spain and Portugal were sympathetic. A Catholic priest had been elected as president of the German-created Republic of Slovakia and with the Axis' extended ban on Masonry, crucifixes went up on the walls of all public buildings in France as they had in Italy at the time of the Vatican-Fascist Concordat, while the old motto from the French Revolution, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity was replaced on French coinage with Work, Family, Fatherland.

With the "fortress" virtually a Catholic one, Pius XII found himself in the awkward position of having become the champion of atheistic Russia and overwhelmingly Protestant Britain, her vast mainly non-Christian Empire and the mainly Protestant United States of America. His predicament reached a climax with Pearl Harbor and the American entry into the war. How were forty million American Catholics going to face that contingency? Already most of those of Italian, German, Irish, Hungarian, Slovenian and Slovakian descent were calling themselves "isolationists". Communist atrocities suffered by priests and nuns during the recent Spanish Civil War were fresh in their minds.

Skilled diplomat that he was, Pius XII met the challenge. Appointing the dynamic young Michael J. Ready, Auxiliary Bishop of Cleveland, to head a campaign to "reinterpret" the anti-Marxist encyclical of Pius XI, *Divini Redemptoris,* word was put forth that Josef Stalin was opening the way for religious freedom in the Soviet Union. It must have been a remarkable juggling act on the part of Bishop Ready and his assistants when one considers that the old Pope, Achille Ratti, had been able to preempt this very disinformation campaign when he wrote the encyclical two years before the outbreak of the war. From *Divini Redemptoris:* "There are even some who refer to certain changes recently introduced into Soviet legislature as a proof that Communism is about to abandon its program of war against God. But do not be deceived!"

That it perturbed Pius XII as head of the Catholic Church to face so many millions of European Catholics as an enthusiastic supporter of their enemies, is evident from a poignant letter the Pope wrote to his old friend and host in New York, Myron C. Taylor, President Roosevelt's envoy

to the Vatican during the long years of the war in Russia. From the letter, "At the request of President Roosevelt, the Vatican has ceased all mention of the Communist regime. But this silence that weighs heavily on our conscience is misunderstood by the Soviet leaders who continue the persecution against churches and faithful. God grant that the free world will not one day regret my silence."

Still the efforts of Pope Pacelli in behalf of Marxism continued. In July 1944 he consented to a meeting between Msgr. Montini and the undisputed leader of Italy's Communists, Palmiro Togliatti, who had just returned to Italy after eighteen years of exile in Soviet Russia.

According to Document JR1022 released by the Washington Office for Strategic Services in 1974 "the discussion between Msgr. Montini and Togliatti was the first direct contact between a high prelate of the Vatican and a leader of Communism. After having examined the situation, they acknowledged the potential possibility of a contingent alliance between Catholics and Communists in Italy which could give the three parties (Christian Democrats, Socialists and Communists) an absolute majority, thereby enabling them to dominate any political situation. A tentative plan was drafted to forge the basis on which the agreement between the three parties could be made. They also drafted a plan of the fundamental lines along which a practical understanding between the Holy See and Russia could be created."

The OSS showed sloppy homework in citing this as the first Vatican-Soviet encounter. Both Jean Madiran and I queried Msgr. Roche about his mention of a wartime meeting between Montini and Stalin himself. We received identical non-answers: "Yes, I agree with you that the Montini-Stalin accord in 1942 was of the greatest importance."

A shocking event that occurred soon afterward was the publication by the Vatican Poliglot Press of a book, *Madonna di Fatima* in which Our Lady's words are so twisted as to provide the enemies of Germany with prime propaganda. The name, "Russia" was removed, so that German guilt was implied.

Who, one wonders, filed Report JR-1022? In the book *OSS, the Secret History of America's First Intelligence Agency,* published by the California University Press in 1971, there are indications that it was Montini himself. According to the author, R. Harris Smith, the future Pope Paul was the key Vatican man in a network of Allied spies particularly charged with gathering information concerning strategic bombing targets in Japan. As for the key Vatican man in Japan at the time, it was none other than Pedro Arrupe, S.J., the future Father General of the Society of Jesus, and survivor of the bombing of Hiroshima.

At the time of his official meeting with Togliatti, Giovanni Montini was 47 and not yet in possession of a Canon Law degree, let alone a bishop's mitre. Yet he was charged with carrying on top level negotiations in the name of the Church. He had indeed gone a long way along the path dreamed of by those early political activists who were his parents.

## *Quashing the Mind*

Q. Who made you?

A. God made me.

Q. Why did He make you?

A. He made me to know Him, to love Him and to serve Him in this life and to be happy with Him forever in the next.

Thus the serene opening of religious teaching for Catholic six-year-olds the world over before the Vatican undermining. It was the simple question and answer formula known as the Catechism. Missionaries had long relied on the method. In sixteenth century Mexico Augustinians and Franciscans from Spain had been able to Christianize the Indians in a remarkably short time by asking such questions as "Are there many gods or is there only one?" Answers were learned by rote so that they were apt to remain on call throughout a lifetime. Repeating the questions and answers of the Catechism left to them by Spanish missionaries was all the Catholics of Japan had to

help them live through two centuries without priests or sacraments and often under intense persecution.

The Catechism was the kind of natural, basic structure that was certain to set the troubled minds of modern Jesuits on a course of frantic invention. Already in 1929 A.J. Jungmann, S.J., a young professor at the University of Innsbruck, was petitioning Rome for permission to submit a comprehensive revision of the entire catechetical system. He received no encouragement from Pius XI. It was not until well into the reign of Pius XII and the conclusion of the Second World War that anything was done and then it was done with a vengeance. By 1946 the Jesuits in Brussels were ready with what they called a catechetical center. In reality *Lumen Vitae* turned out to be headquarters for a frontal attack on Catholic belief unparalleled in history. It was a Jesuit project to be carried out by Jesuits. That it could have come into being or continue to function without papal approval is impossible. Popes are very well informed about what the leading religious orders are up to and Pius XII was in daily contact with one of the highest ranking members of the Society of Jesus, Augustin Bea. Interviewed shortly after the death of the Pope the head of the Biblicum said, "As his confessor I can, of course, say nothing. However I was continuously in close touch with His Holiness on matters which had nothing to do with confession."

The *Lumen Vitae* center at 186 Rue Washington in Brussels was established ostensibly for the creation and dissemination of catechetical publications. Writing in *The Wanderer;* Farley Clinton considered the significance of the organization: "It was an all-Jesuit institution dedicated to the more or less rejection of all received ideas and the divesting of religious teaching of all traditional content. *Lumen Vitae* was extremely well financed from the first and it was meant to function as a worldwide movement. It is difficult

to convey in words how extremely big this organization had become, even within ten years of its founding, that is, by 1956. When the Second Vatican Council was announced it was able to act effectively on an enormous scale because it had been set up by men with very big ideas and extraordinary patience."

It had taken over a quarter century for the pioneer in the movement, the Austrian Jesuit, Dr. A. Jungmann, to realize his project to efface the Catechism. A dry, scholarly priest, Jungmann was an early and passionate participant in the neo-liturgical movement and he would go on to guide the drafting of the Liturgical Constitution of the Council. In the view of Jungmann, "for religious teaching to be effective it must get away from the sterile transmission of theological knowledge and offer instead the good news of the Kingdom of God." This was the precise message of Cardinal Karol Wojtyla to the 1977 International Episcopal Synod when he wound up his intervention with the words, "Personal acceptance is what counts, not mental assent. The best catechist is one who lives out the catechesis."

As far back as 1943 alert observers monitoring the frequent discourses of Pope Pius XII could have guessed that a new approach to religious education was in the offing. Among new openings for aspirants to the priesthood he was suggesting they explore a field only hurriedly touched on up till then, namely that of comparative religion. Then came *Menti Nostrae*, an encyclical which would form the basis for the overturn of a great deal of seminary teaching. In the opinion of Cardinal Garrone, the Curia member in charge of education during the pontificate of Paul VI, *"Menti Nostrae* was not only in tune with the times, it was prophetic, one of the most heroic writings of Pius XII's

audacious ministry. The Council document on seminaries would have been unthinkable without *Menti Nostrae* having set the precedent. In the beautiful Council texts we find everything Pius XII asked for with such courage in his encyclical."

Just how audacious were his thoughts on the learning process was to become crystal clear in an address he made to the Brothers of the Christian Schools in Rome: "The art of education" said the Pope, "is in many aspects the art of adaptation, adapting to the age, adapting to temperament, to character, to the needs of all just aspirations, of adapting to time and place and adapting to the rhythms of the general progress of humanity."

It has been a short, fast trip from *Menti Nostrae* to life in today's seminaries. Setting the pace, the school Ignatius Loyola founded in Rome in the year 1551 as an intellectual citadel from which to battle the Protestant revolt, the Pontifical Gregorian University. By the end of the 1960's Latin had disappeared at the "Greg", along with traditional monastic routine and all off-campus restrictions. Women came on the scene, some two hundred attending classes, Protestant and Jewish professors were appointed, cinema courses included uncensored films of Bufluel, Bergman and Dreyer and beer became available at an inside bar.

Reinhardt Raffalt recalled dropping in one day in 1940 at the Germanicum, Rome's German-Hungarian College, to find the students clad in their fire-engine-red cassocks dining in silence as they listened to devotional reading. Paying a second visit in 1970 he was greeted by a babel of jeans-clad youth shouting from table to table.

Other young Germans had been treated to a curious experiment during the late 1940's when Nuncio Roncalli and Pro-Secretary Montini dreamed up a correspondence course for prisoners of war, dubbing the scheme, "barbed wire seminaries". The curriculum was publicized as being the work of Msgr. Montini, however, considering his very heavy schedule, virtually running the Vatican, and considering Pius XII's penchant for writing, it can be reasonably assumed that the lessons were planned and detailed by the Pope in his excellent German.

What happened at the "Greg" (Gregorian) and the Germanicum was happening all over the world during the sixties and seventies. The faithful of Newark, New Jersey, had pooled their meager savings during the Depression years to build what soon became a flourishing major seminary at nearby Darlington. Today faculty members admit, "there are so few vocations in Newark that we accept students from anywhere, including lay people, both men and women, nuns, Protestants." Roman Catholic doctrine has been replaced almost entirely by what is called "current Catholic thought" and the few students who aspire to the priesthood are as free to come and go as any of the others, each sharing a two-bed apartment with bath, television, stereo, refrigerator and, on demand, a portable bar.

An extreme case, perhaps, but in line with the worldwide consequences of the destruction of the Catechism and the invitation to freedoms initiated at the top with a papal encyclical. Kenneth Baker, one of the few Jesuits unwilling to go along with the *Lumen Vitae* crowd, wonders now that seminary after seminary has been forced to close down for lack of students, if the future training for the priesthood had best be done privately by knowledgeable,

still dedicated, pastors. Obviously the time for finding those pastors is running out.

The enthusiasm expressed by Cardinal Garrone for *Menti Nostrae* was matched only by his joy over another Pacelli encyclical of the 1940's, *Divino Afflante Spiritu* which he described as "a powerful breath of fresh air". Dedicated to the problem of biblical scholarship this document deals with the precise subject which had touched off the Modernist movement of the turn of the century. It had been the publication of a study called *The Essence of Christianity* by the German Lutheran theologian, Adolf Harnack, with its demand for a radical reassessment of the Scriptures and the subsequent favorable reaction to that book on the part of prominent Catholic pedagogues, that had set the stage.

The American exegete, Raymond Brown, agreed wholeheartedly with the applause of Garrone for *Divino Afflante Spiritu* saying the encyclical "represents a complete about-face in attitudes toward biblical study" and he expressed satisfaction that, thanks to the opening it afforded, it is now possible in Catholic seminaries "to consider that the early chapters of *Genesis* were not historical, that the *Book of Isaiah* was not a single book, that *Matthew* was not the work of an eye-witness, that the four *Gospels* were not four harmonious biographies and were sometimes inaccurate in detail."

Another well-known churchman who had kind words for *Divino Afflante Spiritu* was the usually dissident Fr. Hans Küng. "It shows", he wrote, "how far the Church is willing to go in accepting modern attitudes toward exegetical methods and along with it, shows a tacit disapproval of the anti-Modernist decrees of Pope Pius X. Moreover the

document gives clear recognition of the authority of the original texts over that of any translation, ancient or modern. Hence it gives a definite decrease in the importance of the Vulgate."

When in the early 1950's Pius XII gave the green light to Bea and his staff at the Biblicum to begin work on a new translation of the *Psalms*, as well as the scriptural prayers recited in the priest's daily office, they were meant to replace those contained in the Vulgate, the officially accepted translation of the *Bible* since the days of its author, the fifth century St. Jerome. Not only was the resulting text, as Bonneterre points out, impossible to sing to plain chant but it was to provide yet another blow to what Avery Dulles calls the priest's "spiritual serenity" by taking away the familiar and beloved ring of the old, often recited phrases of the Vulgate.

## *Savaging Tradition*

In comparison with the chaos that followed it, the long reign of Pius XII seems to older conservative Catholics of today to have been a time when all was right with the Church. Except for occasional rumors of liturgical experimentation in Belgium and France, the old institution appeared to be united in doctrine and ritual, secure in

its Magisterium and that Magisterium safe in the austere, rather remote figure of Pope Pacelli. Wraithlike in white, he enhanced his frequent pronouncements in melodious Italian with unequaled dignity. It was a time when eighty percent of American Catholics were attending Sunday Mass regularly while an atmosphere of absolute certitude brought conversions and not only in the missionary fields of Africa. In 1950 Cardinal Spellman was able to say, "If the present rate of conversions continues, in another century the United States will be a Catholic country."

Yet it was precisely in those flourishing times that the Pope, who was coming to be referred to as "the Angelic Pastor", with Fr. Montini, his right-hand man in tandem, was pushing through mutations in doctrine and practice that were going to set the whole edifice trembling. Step by step the two were moving toward a Council that would be a kind of final solution for those mutations.

While the destruction of the Catechism would be the most telling blow the faithful would be asked to take, the subversion of the liturgy would effect them emotionally to a much greater degree. As early as 1947 Pope Pacelli, in consultation with academics of Louvain University along with a group of advanced neo-liturgists based in Paris, was setting up a commission for the complete overhauling of the sacred liturgy. As Secretary he chose a thirty-five year old priest, one Fr. Bugnini, who had the evocative first name of Annibale, having been born in a town along the shores of Lake Trasimeno where Hannibal and his elephants roundly defeated the Romans. Beating the Romanness out of the Missal, the ancient Book of the Mass, became the major goal of Fr. Bugnini and his group of

*periti*. That the Pope gave great importance to this committee and its works is evident in lines from an autobiography which Bugnini wrote many years after the Council when he had attained the rank of Archbishop. "We enjoyed the full confidence of Pius XII who was kept informed of our work by Msgr. Montini and even more by Fr. Bea, his confessor. Thanks to these intermediaries we could arrive at remarkable results even in periods when the Pope's illness prevented anyone else from seeing him."

Had it not been for this enthusiastic support of the Pope, it is probable that major liturgical changes would not have been attempted by the commission, since members of the Curial office, the Sacred Congregation for Rites, opposed Bugnini nearly all the way. Even to attain the radical changes that the Pope wanted in the Easter rites took six years, but Pacelli was Pope and he would have to be the victor. Finally in 1955 the papal decree *Maxima Redemptionis* went into effect, moving the Holy Saturday celebrations from the morning to late in the night and calling for a series of variants, making of it a kind of rehearsal for the New Mass, still a decade in the future. In many of the Pacelli-planned Easter ceremonies the priest faced the people, the opening prayers at the foot of the altar and the last Gospel were suppressed, as were the traditional Holy Week devotions of the Three Hours on Good Friday and the very moving solemnities of *Tenebrae*.

It was early in the 1950's that Pius XII sent a directive to the superiors of every order of women religious in the world. Its message, according to a Canadian nun who remembers it, was "modernize, or else..." The directive had to do with spiritual attitudes, the cloistered life, dress and so

on. It had gone largely unheeded. Apparently dismayed, the Pope ordered the superiors to come to Rome so that he could impress upon them the seriousness of intention to bring nuns up to date. Mentioning in his initial address to the group that sending for them had cost a good deal of money, he was promptly presented with a generous check to cover expenses. He returned it saying that a better way to use the money would be to contribute it to a fund to establish a school for higher studies in Rome where certain women in the worldwide religious orders could come for special courses and seminars. This was the origin of the women's *College of Regina Mundi.*

During the decade between 1944 and 1954 the French worker-priest movement had its beginning and its subsequent ups and downs. During the last year of the war the three most liberal-minded Cardinals of France, Lienart, Suhard and Feltin, obtained from Pius XII permission for a project in which certain priests were to be freed from ordinary duties to work in factories and in what were termed "city missions". The idea, it was said, was to evangelize workers who were being increasingly subjected to Marxist pressure. Within a year or so there were around a hundred French worker-priests, half of them members of religious orders.

It was not long before many of these men became involved one way or another in Marxist cadres. Instead of converting, they were being converted. Even so, there appears to have been no conflict with the Vatican until the spring of 1949 when Pius XII made an abrupt move amounting to a political about-face. The politics were Italian, not French. Since the war the heirs to Giorgio Montini's Popular Party, the Christian Democrats, had been the leading,force in the Italian Parliament. By 1949, however, the

growing Communist Party was threatening to overpower them in coming elections. Then it was that Pius XII came to the rescue in a pragmatic gesture that would win for him a mythical status, that of an "anti-Marxist". Calling in the Holy Office, he ordered them to publish a decree forbidding Italian Catholics to join the Communist Party. As a consequence the Christian Democrats pulled through and the Pope, already ten years in the Chair of Peter, delivered the first recognizably anti-Marxist discourse of his pontificate.

Immediately Vatican Radio, broadcasting internationally, startled the world with a wealth of data they had been collecting but had been forbidden until now to divulge. Suddenly it was learned that, not only was it true that some sixty-five million European Catholics in the East were finding it difficult or impossible to practice their faith, but priests had been executed, some six thousand of them as a matter of fact, mostly in the Ukraine, but also in the Baltic States and in Bulgaria. Four thousand five hundred priests had disappeared, deported to Siberia or imprisoned in Czechoslavakia, Hungary and Poland.

Neither that news, the papal discourse, or even the Holy Office decree put an end to the worker-priest movement in France, however. There followed four more years of activity, much of it exceedingly controversial with priests reported wounded and even arrested in street battles. From the Vatican came occasional reminders of the wrongness of class struggle but it was not until 1953 that Pius XII withdrew permission for the worker-priest movement. How effective the notice to withdraw was, can be judged from a note in the Paris daily *Le Monde* in 1987 citing the presence of at least eight hundred worker-priests operating in the country.

Meanwhile, as if to balance in a very small way his turn against the far Left, Pius XII directed his attention to Catholics at the other end of the social scale. For three successive years, on one excuse or another, he had put off the customary annual reception of the Roman aristocrats, members of the Black Nobility, men and women of ancient lineage who had closed their palace doors in 1870 when the Papal States fell to the insurgents. Refusing all favor from the newly installed royal House of Savoy, they professed solidarity with the "Prisoner in the Vatican". Finally deciding to receive them in 1956, Pius in effect dismissed them. His explanation: "The impetuous wind of a new era blows away many traditions of the past. It carries with it much that the past has built up. Italy's new post-Fascist constitution does not recognize any particular mission in any social class, neither any attribute nor any privilege. A page in history has been turned, a chapter closed. A new chapter has opened. You may think what you like but those are the facts." He was echoing the words of Franklin Roosevelt to Winston Churchill when the latter lamented the fact that America seemed indifferent to the fate of the British Empire. Said the President, "A new period has opened in the world's history and you will have to adjust yourself to it."

For the Church the early 1950's brought more loosening of sacramental discipline. Pius XII gave permission for the celebration of evening Masses and he reduced the period of fasting from the midnight before the reception of Holy Communion to a mere three hours, while in the United States a major step in liturgical change got underway when the Confraternity for Christian Doctrine requested and received permission from the Vatican for the celebration of what it called an "American Ritual" in which a good deal of the Mass was said in English.

Structures which would become important in the New Church were beginning to take shape. At the suggestion of the radical Brazilian, Msgr. Helder Camara, the Pope sent Bishop Antonio Samord, assisted by the young Fr. Agostino Casaroli, to Colombia to pull together the individual episcopal conferences of the vast regions of Latin America into a cohesive, easier to manage, super-episcopal conference which would emerge after the Council as CELAM. At the same time the Pope gave encouragement to Spaniards to launch the *Cursillo* movement, like the Focolare and the Base Communities, convenient to the eventual spread of "liberation theology" in Central and South America. One Latin American, destined to become a Marxist martyr, the young Colombian Camilo Torres, S.J. turned up in Rome in 1953 to receive the blessing not only of the Jesuit Father General but of Pope Pius who praised him for his expressed goal of establishing a "new world order for Latin America."

Soon Pius XII was joining the worldwide hue and cry organized by the Socialist International to save the Soviet spies, Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, from the electric chair. The gesture was in line with his intervention ten years earlier when his friend, the British envoy to the Holy See, armed with the signatures of forty pro-Marxist London-based intellectuals, begged him to save the life of Italy's top Communist leader, Luigi Longo, rumored to be slated for execution. To the acute embarrassment of the Vatican, the Fascist Foreign Minister, Count Galeazzo Ciano, replied icily that "Although the militant Communist Longo is being held in detention, there has never been the intention of executing him."

Outstanding among the Pacelli encyclicals of the 1950's was *Humani Generis*, which dealt with the origin of man.

John Paul II referred to it in October, 1996: *"Humani Generis* considered evolution to be a serious hypothesis worthy of more deeply studied investigation."

At the time, particularly in France, intellectuals, both those pro and con on the evolutionism of Teilhard de Chardin, reached for first copies with interest, only to find, as "Xavier Rynne" explained, "What was immediately discernible about the encyclical was its pastoral spirit. It cited no one for condemnation nor did ecclesiastical censorship occur after the publication, although eventually two provincials, a Dominican and a Jesuit, were shifted to other assignments. Although certain tendencies and ideas were proscribed, the encyclical made no attempt to stifle theological initiatives. Rather it encouraged vital and existentialist investigation of current problems."

That was the good news that reached Fr. Teilhard boarding an ocean liner at Southampton for a voyage to Buenos Aires. Having recently been invited to join the dissident Old Catholics in Utrecht, he had declined saying that, while he agreed in general with their stand, he intended to remain within the Church in order, as he put it, "to transform it". His letter to Holland read in part, "I think essentially that the Church has come to the point where transformation, that is, essential reform, must occur. After two thousand years there is no help for it. Mankind itself is in the throes of transformation; how could Catholicism escape? To be specific, I believe this reformation, a much more radical affair than the one in the sixteenth century, is not a mere matter of institutions or morals but of faith itself. Somehow our conception of God is divided. Besides the traditional transcendent God a sort of God of the future has arisen for us in the course of the last century."

In France just then, Catholic academics were playing with the idea of rehabilitating the one-time Augustinian monk, Martin Luther. A young priest who protested, Georges de Nantes, was relieved of his teaching post. Nearly as serious to the Abbé as losing his job, was the appearance of the first major work by the Dominican, Yves Congar. It was shock from reading, *True and False Reform in the Church* as much as the personal matter that took him to Rome in 1953. "I wanted to alert those responsible against the grave danger of the reforms Congar proposed. I saw them leading to a perversion of the whole Church, along the lines we were already experiencing in France. Although I was well received and listened to, I found the Romans did not take our French quarrels seriously and were too certain of their own authority over the rest of the world."

Meanwhile in Rome Msgr. Bugnini and his Pontifical Commission were proceeding energetically with the organization of international liturgical congresses. Successive meetings at the German shrine of Maria Laach, at Lugano in Switzerland and Louvain in Belgium were dedicated to the progressive reduction of what had come down through the ages as the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The continual hacking away for the purpose, it was claimed of making it "more relevant to modern man" was to attain its goal a decade later when a representative of the Lutheran Augsburg Conference was able to declare that "obstacles hindering the Protestant participation in the (Catholic) Eucharist are disappearing. Today it should be possible for a Protestant to recognize in the Catholic eucharistic celebration the Supper instituted by the Lord."

After Louvain came the greatest of the liturgical congresses, that of Assisi. Twelve hundred delegates, among them six cardinals and eighty bishops, converged on the little Umbrian city of St. Francis. The year was 1956. In his book *Has the Catholic Church Gone Mad?* the British scholar, John Eppstein, considers this assembly to be the run-up to the drastic liturgical decrees that followed the Council.

He writes, "Here was a group of enthusiasts ready to implement the pre-Conciliar organization still to be convoked by Cardinal Cicognani. Its members were drawn mostly from France, Germany, Belgium, Holland and the United States. It did not take them long to work out the *schema* for the Liturgical Constitution which was ready when the Council met. Many of the same group worked together throughout the Council and found their way into the post-Conciliar commission set up to implement the principles which Vatican II had adopted. And during the whole process the dominant figure was Msgr. Bugnini who headed each of the stages of work in the reforming bodies. ...Bugnini was as much an architect of the New Mass as Cranmer of the Book of Common Prayer."

That Pius XII was pleased with the Congress at Assisi and with its guidance by his appointee, Bugnini, was evident from the closing message he addressed to the assembly. In part, "The liturgical movement has appeared like a sign of a providential gift of God for our time, like a passage of the Holy Spirit over the Church in order to show the faithful the mysteries of the faith and the riches of grace that come from active participation in the liturgy."

Among the events drawing inspiration from the Assisi Congress that year, was a Canadian symposium entitled "The Great Action of the Christian Church", organized by the North American Liturgical Conference and a committee headed by Bishop (later Cardinal) John Wright of

Worcester, Massachusetts, it presented a central ritual unparalleled at the time. Replacing the *Introibo,* the opening words that had come into the Mass in the days of Charlemagne, "I go unto the altar of God, to God who gives joy to my youth" with "We welcome our president" chanted in unison, the ceremony proceeded to the tune of rousing Lutheran hymns, a sermon in which it was explained that the Eucharist was a community meal rather than a sacrifice and to top the morning off there was a Pontifical Blessing from Pius XII in Rome.

Another pocket of devotion that was already well updated long before the Council, was Downside Abbey in England. The novelist Evelyn Waugh, spending his customary Holy Week in retreat at Downside, noted in his journal, "Rather boring, since the new ritual, introduced for the first time this year, leaves many hours unemployed. There is a bright young philosopher, a Fr. Illtyd Trethowan, who gave outstanding conferences. I found myself disagreeing with everything he said and resenting the new liturgy."

## *Gathering for the Kill*

In 1954 the priest, reported by several important observers to be virtually running the Vatican, Fr. Montini, 57, received his consecration to the episcopate and an appointment to the second most important Archbishopric in Italy, that of the northern industrial city of Milan. That it must have cost the Pope, now 78, dearly to send away his closest collaborator of more than two decades, there can be no doubt. As he became more and more absorbed in the writing of encyclicals and, as we now learn, in planning the Council, Montini must have become virtually indispensable to him.

Amid the never-ending polemics as to why the appointment to Milan was made without the bestowal of a cardinal's hat, there have been at least three altogether different stories. It has been suggested, but only in Italy, that Fr. Montini was somehow involved in the squalid Montesi scandal that was making international headlines at the time. Another version has it that Montini had resigned in a huff over a budget scheme for Vatican City of which be disapproved. However most often it was thought, particularly outside Italy, that the Pope, discovering that his trusted assistant was having secret talks with Communist leaders, banished him from his sight in shock and sorrow.

So far no serious evidence for any of the stories has come to light. Most unlikely of all would be the third and most popular tale, considering the fact that Nuncio Pacelli

was himself practicing *Ostpolitik* as far back as 1918 when he carried on private negotiation on behalf of Pope Benedict with top Soviet leaders. Hansjakob Stehle, Vatican correspondent for *Die Welt* of Hamburg and author of the comprehensive study *Die Ostpolitik des Vatikans 1917-1975* found in recently opened German State archives details of protracted talks between Bishop Pacelli and Soviet Commissar Cicerin. Stehle says he was astounded at the concessions offered by the Nuncio. There were to be no Polish priests sent into Russia and no priests of any nationality who were not approved by Moscow. Before the talks were concluded, Soviet attitudes hardened and in the end nothing was done.

As for the Montini-Togliatti rendezvous it happened a good ten years before the Milan appointment and, while it was certainly secret until revealed by the American State Department in 1974, the meeting was no secret from 'the Vatican. Msgr. Montini met Togliatti, as he had met Stalin in 1942 as Substitute Secretary of State, the recognized spokesman for the Pope. Moreover, according to Stehle, no sooner had Pius XII dispatched Montini to Milan in 1954 than he himself reopened negotiations with the Soviets by sending the Viennese theologian Msgr. Röding, on a confidential mission to Moscow.

It is true that Pius did not make Montini a cardinal and that the See of Milan is usually ruled by a cardinal. However the explanation, as revealed by subsequent events, lay in the fact that the Pope did not want Montini to be available for election to the papacy in a conclave he knew could not be far off. Montini must be spared the brunt of what was going to be a severe shock to the faithful, namely the Council he was planning. Meanwhile the message sent to the new Archbishop at the time of his installation was glowing with warmth, gratitude and praise.

Msgr. Montini seems to have taken to the new more independent life in Milan with zest. Initiating what would become an eight-year sojourn in the Lombard capitol with a dramatic gesture, hitherto unknown among Catholic prelates, that of kissing the ground on arrival, he went on to play host to a succession of men whose influence would weigh heavily on the future of the Church. There were successive delegations of non-Catholic theologians staying at the Episcopal palace, most of them members of the Anglican Communion. There was Jacques Maritain whose "integral humanism" Montini and Pacelli had been promoting for the last twenty years. By the mid-1950's the Maritain thesis had become the hidden life of the Church only awaiting the Council to insert itself into the lives of the faithful. Following his wartime years as a refugee in Canada the French philosopher had spent three years in Rome as Ambassador to the Holy See and had now returned to France in order to dedicate all his time to writing.

One summer Maritain brought to Montini's residence an American whom he said he considered to be "one of only three revolutionaries worthy of the name, indeed, one of the few really great men of this century". It was Saul David Alinsky. The self-styled "professional radical" was to spend an entire week with Archbishop Montini discussing the Church's relations with the powerful local Communist trade union. "It was an interesting experience", Alinsky told his biographer, M.K. Sanders, "There I was, sitting between the Archbishop and a beautiful grey-eyed blonde Milanese Communist union official, exploring the common interests bridging Communism and capitalism."

As for religion, Saul Alinsky explained his attitude to *Playboy* a few years later. He said he had turned away from his strict Jewish family in order to join the International Brigade in the Spanish Civil War. Going on to develop his theory of "People Power", he said that it was after meeting Jacques Maritain that he began to see how revolution could become part of the Catholic Church. He preferred to call it, however, the "Church of Today and Tomorrow" and it was a Church which he felt must become quite free of dogma." I detest and fear dogma. Nobody owns the truth and dogma, whatever form it takes, is the ultimate enemy of human freedom." Alinsky, Montini and Maritain expressed serene accord that the Church Militant must give way to the Church Loving.

By the late 1950's the days of Eugenio Pacelli were drawing to a close and the time of the Council approaching. Unusual light is thrown on the feverish activity of that time by Elizabeth Gerstner, an assistant to the German who headed the Bonn office of the Lay Apostolate, a newly set up Vatican organization. It was the illness of her chief that brought young Mrs. Gerstner to the central office, some twenty rooms in a complex of old buildings in Rome's Piazza di San Calisto. The coordination and promotion of major assemblies throughout the world was the aim of work carried out with strenuous efficiency by a staff of twenty-five, under the direction of Rosemary Goldie, daughter of a Jewish newspaper man in Australia.

From the beginning Mrs. Gerstner was astonished at the familiarity with which Miss Goldie and the other members of the staff treated Curial cardinals and bishops. There was no difficulty in communicating with them at any hour of the day. Gradually it dawned on her how important this committee

was, functioning as a kind of processing center for every phase of hierarchy-laity relations throughout the world.

In retrospect, however, the center has taken on an ever greater significance for it as an antechamber of the Second Vatican Council. Well before the announcement of the Council the kind of churchmen who moved in and out of the offices at San Calisto presaged the changes ahead. There was the jolly old Jesuit Augustin Bea, 78, whose Episcopal consecration, his negotiations with Jewish leaders and his Secretariat for Christian Unity were still ahead of him. There was the protégée of that long-deceased pioneer of change, Cardinal Mercier of Malines-Brussels, Leo Suenens, now Auxiliary Bishop of the same diocese, not yet "born again" nor converted to Pentecostalism. There were the younger avant-garde Jesuits, Jean Danièlou, Malachi Martin, Roberto Tucci who would go on to head Vatican Radio and there were the even more avant-garde theologians, such as Yves Congar, Josef Ratzinger, and Bernard Häring. Members of the Laity Committee itself included François Dubois-Dumée, journalist and avowed Communist, as well as Msgr. Achille Glorieux who would be found to have been in charge of the waylaying operation in which an anti-Marxist draft resolution signed by 450 Council fathers vanished from sight. In his *The Rhine Flows Into the Tiber* Fr. Wiltgen wrote, "From four different sources I learned that the person who had withheld the document was Msgr. Glorieux of Lille, France, who was holding down half a dozen Vatican posts at the time."

Inevitably the continued presence of men like these engendered an atmosphere entirely new to the young representative from Germany. Neither her considerable travel nor her wide international contacts had prepared her for the kind of language she was hearing at San Calisto. She was unable to reconcile it with anything she knew to be Catholic.

When news came that a Council had been summoned, it suddenly became clear to her that these men had not only been working toward Vatican II but were moving way beyond it, planning situations and inventing structures for an entirely new kind of Church in which the priesthood, the liturgy, the Sacraments and the Mass itself would be of little importance.

Late in 1962 making her farewells after three years at San Calisto, Mrs. Gerstner stopped in to see one of the men whose reasoned words had rested her mind after the incomprehensible goings-on at the Lay Apostolate offices, the ageing Spaniard, Arcadio Cardinal Larraona. She told him of her feeling of dread for the future of the Church. He gave her no comfort.

"They are going to change everything", he said, "the liturgy, everything. Latin will go completely."

She told him of her love for Latin and how she had taught Gregorian plain-song to Black girls in a settlement house in New York City and how, to their delight, by the end of summer they were able to sing through the entire Mass. The Cardinal's only comment, "They are going to do away with all of it."

What is interesting is that as an insider Larraona knew at least a year before the Council opened that in top Vatican circles a plan to phase out Latin had been formulated, decided upon and only awaited the bishops' signatures to be ratified. Mrs. Gerstner's revelation thus makes pointless the mountain of post-Conciliar analyses about how and when it was that events during the Council were decisive for change. What happened to the liturgy had begun to happen in 1947 when Pope Pius XII set up his liturgical commission and selected young Fr. Bugnini to manage it.

## *Collecting the Signatures*

Pope Pius XII died four years before the Council he conceived assembled. That in reality it had been Pacelli, the "Angelic Pastor", who had willed the event supposed responsible for creating a Church he would hardly have recognized, is difficult for most Catholics to grasp. For conservatives, what they saw as the firm orthodoxy of a revered Pope would have made his sanctioning of troubling Council documents impossible, whereas progressives would be loath to give such a "rigid" Pontiff credit for change.

Yet the Propositor for the beatification of Eugenio Pacelli, Msgr. Paul Molinari, S.J., speaking on Vatican Radio, called "ignorant" those who assume the Church did a turn-about on the death of Pius XII. "There was no break. On the contrary, one has only to look at the Council documents in which the teaching of Pius is referred to more than two hundred times, far more often in fact, than any source with the exception of Holy Scripture. For years His Holiness worked at preparatory studies for the Council. He only suspended work on them when he became convinced that Catholics did not have enough preparation to withstand the shock of a council."

Marcel Clement, French journalist, agrees with Msgr. Molinari, "This great Pope not only made the Second Vatican Council possible, he prepared the way for it. I personally was able to observe, while following the Council day by day as a reporter, how many of the ideas and aspirations

which only came to light under the cupola of St. Peter's had actually been anticipated under his pontificate. He was the first to ease the discipline of the Eucharistic fast. He modified the Tridentine liturgy and the Easter rites. He further authorized reading in the vernacular. He was first to accord mass media the same importance the Council would afford it. In short he began the whole process which was to continue during and after Vatican II."

In a Jesuit Year Book Fr. Giovanni Caprile, a senior editor of *Civiltà Cattólica,* put it this way: "One need only think of Pope Pius' approval of the secular institutes, of his exhortation to female religious, *Sponsa Christi,* his discourses in 1950 and later."

The well known dissident, Hans Küng, has written glowingly about the progressive steps taken by Pius XII. Mistaking him for the originator of the Dialogue Mass which antedated the Pacelli reign and even his tenure of Secretary of State, Küng rejoiced that it "helped to recover the explicitly communal character of the Mass". He goes on to laud the Pope for giving permission as far back as 1949 for the use of Hebrew and Chinese for the entire Mass with the exception of the Canon. Then there was the renewal "full of promise" of the liturgy for Holy Week, his discouragement of subjective devotions in favor of common prayer, his internationalizing of the College of Cardinals with thirty-two new appointments and finally his giving permission to German Lutheran pastors who became Catholic priests to remain married and to make full use of their marriage.

The year before he died, Pius XII opened seminaries, monasteries and convents to the deadly brainwashing known as psychoanalysis by bestowing his blessing on the founding of the Marsalin Institute in the Boston diocese, a

center to be dedicated to early detection of mental illness in apparently normal recruits for the religious life.

As Fr. Jerome Maynard, O.B., explained to a large group of Council Fathers at the invitation of Belgium's Cardinal Suenens: "If a young Catholic is presumed to be a believer at the start of analysis and comes out of it unbelieving, it can only mean that his previous religiosity was the product of a sick mind."

Years later, repentant psychotherapist, William Coulson, confessed to Dr. Marra in *The Latin Mass* that he and famed therapist Carl Rogers literally destroyed whole communities of Franciscans, of Sisters of Charity and a dozen more orders across the United States. They even aided in ruining the Jesuits who rewarded them with two honorary degrees. Said Coulson, "Everywhere we talked we tried to show these people how to become aware of themselves, their real, their inner selves." To help them see that Christian asceticism, the giving of one's self to God, is a sick and childish absurdity, unfair to their precious selves in our sexy, consumer society?.

Had he lived a few more years, would Pius XII have had to rescind his approval of the Freudian evil as he had been forced to rescind his sanction of the worker priest movement?

It was late in 1958 and the death of Eugenio Pacelli was bringing renewed activity to the offices at Piazza San Calisto, when coming on a weeping Elizabeth Gerstner, Miss Goldie asked what troubled her. The answer seemed obvious so the German countered with a question of her own, "Tell me, Rosemary, who do you think is going to be the next Pope?"

"Why, didn't you know? Angelo Roncalli, of course."

Who? Oh, you mean the Patriarch of Venice? But why ?"

"Oh, Elizabeth, you don't know anything, do you? Roncalli will be Pope for a few years and then Gianbattista Montini, of course."

Cardinal Heenan of Westminster who took part in the 1958 Conclave, confirms the Roncalli-Montini plan. In his biography, *Crown of Thorns* he relates, "There was no great mystery about Pope John's election. He was chosen because he was a very old man. His chief duty was to make Msgr. Montini (Archbishop of Milan) a cardinal so that he could be elected in the next conclave. That was the policy and it was carried out precisely."

One insider, Msgr. Bruno Heim, who had been Roncalli's secretary during the Nunciature days in Paris, had no doubt about who was going to emerge as Pope from the forthcoming conclave. His hobby was heraldry and for weeks before the meetings he had been working on a papal coat of arms for his former chief.

Commenting on his election, the new Pope, 78, apparently found a certain satisfaction in his interim status, expressing it in quite transcendental terms: "I shall be called John, a name dear to us for its reminder of the precursor of the Lord who was not himself the Light but was to bear witness to the Light." Was it, one wonders, the future Montini pontificate or the as yet unannounced Council he was comparing to the coming of Christ? And Pope John was not alone in building up his proposed successor on the Throne of Peter. Mrs. Gerstner tells us that members and employees of the Lay Apostolate at Piazza di San Calisto were instructed to form a clique to applaud each public appearance of Msgr. Montini.

Pope John must have been strangely confident that of the several hundred people involved for many months in setting up the Council, not one of them had breathed a word of it. Or perhaps it was only a measure of how little the faithful are aware of what goes on inside the Vatican that his way of describing how he had come to call a Council did not strike them as absurd. "The impulse came", he said "completely unexpected like a flash of heavenly light, shedding sweetness in eyes and hearts."

Four whole days before those ethereal words were uttered "insider" Hans Küng proved to be so well acquainted with the basic themes of the Council-to-be that he was outlining them to an astonished lecture audience in the Hofkirche of the city of Luzern. In his book *Council, Reform and Reunion,* published on the eve of Vatican II, Küng shows that he knew even a little better than the Pope what was afoot, since he had been present at the last high-level meeting in Munich, chaired by Archbishop Montini, in which Pacelli plans for the Council had been thoroughly worked over. Taking part, besides Fr. Küng, were such notably progressive bishops as Msgr. Dópfner, Suenens, Kónig and that up and coming protègèe of Pope John, Albino Luciani, the future John Paul I, one of the very few Italians admitted to the Montini inner circle. Along with the prelates were their indispensable *periti,* the German Bernard Häring and Josef Ratzinger, among others.

One priest who left the Munich conference with a serious commitment was Augustin Bea. He had been charged with telling Pope John that it had been decided the time had come to set up a special Vatican office to be devoted to ecumenism. John is reported to have been delighted with the idea. A few months later, on the feast of Pentecost, the Secretariat for the Promotion of

Christian Unity came into being. On that day, June 5, 1959, as if by coincidence, its first president, Fr. Bea, happened to be in New York; thus Vatican ecumenism was launched where the media would do it the most good. Msgr. Lefebvre, talking in Turin in 1974, said Council Fathers knew Bea's Manhattan trip was to obtain approval for the new Secretariat from the top Jewish Lodge, B'nai B'rith.

Among the first appointees to the Secretariat was Fr. Gregory Baum, a convert from Judaism who has subsequently left the priesthood. "Bea", said Baum, "told us how we were to promote ecumenism. We were to try to influence bishops in our countries by influencing public opinion. We were to write as much as we could and to speak often on radio and TV."

Meanwhile Angelo Roncalli, the interim Pope, was doing his best to line up the kind of *dramatis personae* that could be counted on to put through the Pacelli-Montini plans at the Council and to carry them on afterwards. Holding five consistories, he appointed 52 cardinals, among them the liberal Germans who would dominate the debates, Döpfner and Alfrink, Cardinal Mercier's protégée, Leo Suenens, Confalonieri, so important during the *Action Française* troubles when he acted as Pope Ratti's private secretary, South Americans who would prove invaluable when it came to getting "liberation theology" underway, Silva Henríquez of Chile and Landazurri Ricketts of Peru. For his Secretary of State Pope John chose a man only one year younger than himself, Amleto Cicognani, who as Apostolic Delegate of Pius XII had controlled the appointment of two hundred of the two hundred fifty bishops who would make up the American contingent at the forthcoming Council.

Between trips to Germany the Archbishop of Milan was also running back and forth to Rome. Looking in one day at the office of the Vatican's official Preparatory Commission for the Council he was stopped with the words: "Look, *Monsignor,* this kind of thing is not Catholic. We will have to condemn it."

Montini's reply was brusk, "With you, Msgr. Lefebvre, everything is 'condemn, condemn'. You might as well understand now that in the future there are going to be no more condemnations. Condemnations are finished". One wonders if those words reverberated in the mind of the venerable Frenchman twenty-eight years later when he read the sentence of his own excommunication. Or did he perhaps recall the more recent pronouncement of Msgr. Tomko, head of the Permanent Episcopal Synod, to the effect that "excommunication is as outdated as the electric chair or the gas chamber"? As for Marcel Lefebvre's presence in the Preparatory Commission, it had been obligatory under existing protocol, since he was Superior General of the world's largest missionary order, the Holy Ghost Fathers. As Council sessions began, his recommendations and others like his were discarded as irrelevant. Indeed the Council had hardly gotten underway when the entire two years work by the official Preparatory Commission was thrown out to make room for the well programmed agenda already prepared by insiders.

Insider preparation for the Council was also going on in faraway New Delhi. A Vatican envoy was negotiating with Patriarch Nikodim of the Soviet branch of the Orthodox Church, who was taking part in the World Conference of Churches then in session in the Indian city. It was agreed that the Patriarch would meet Cardinal Tisserant in the French town of Metz

to work out plans for Orthodox observers to attend the Council on condition no derogatory words concerning Marxism were allowed to be spoken during the entire term of the assembly.

By October 1962 with the first session of the Council about to begin, Pope John and Archbishop Montini were exuding confidence. *Time,* writing on the election of Paul VI years later, recalled their mood, "Pope John showered attention on Montini who is reported to have had a hand in preparing the keynote speech which opened the Vatican Council."

While John and the future Paul approached the Council optimistically, certain insiders expressed misgivings. Fr. Hans Küng was writing that he wondered if the gathering was coming too late. He realized that "in certain circles of ecclesiastics there are those who are not in the least interested in a Council and have no use for reform." How, he wondered, was it going to be possible to get the majority in favor of far-reaching changes? And then he answered his own question: "Everything that comes before the Council must be strained through carefully selected commissions and then proceed not so much as if through the will of the bishops as through the will of the Pope."

And so it was done. Looking back many years later Archbishop Lefebvre would admit to having been taken in by that strategy, "I, too, was persuaded and personally impressed by the fact that the Pope wanted the documents signed as presented. I signed all but two of them."

Over and over during the three years of meetings the artful combination of papal charisma and the continuous and determined action of papally-appointed, liberal-packed commissions was able to push through the revolution. The very goodness and trust of those who let themselves be shunted

along, rather than their indifference, worked toward certain victory for the insiders who had long been making plans to change the Church. Unless a Council Father happened to be one of the inner group, he would have had no notion of how well organized the rebels against tradition were and how long and patiently they had been at work. Certainly it would never have occurred to any them, least of all to a man like Msgr. Lefebvre, that the driving power behind all that they regretted had been that of four Popes and a Vatican Secretary of State.

# III

# MEN AT THE TOP

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"Pope John was spared the agony of seeing the Catholic Church in decline", wrote the Archbishop of Westminster, John Cardinal Heenan, not long after the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council. "At the time of his death there was no hint of impending disintegration. John would have wept over Rome the way Jesus wept over Jerusalem if he had known what would be done in the name of the Council."

So it may have seemed at the time. In perspective, however, the idea of Angelo Roncalli weeping over a revolution he had helped bring about would seem not only unreasonable but quite out of character. He was not a tragic figure.

Undeniably there was anguish in the last years of both his predecessor and his successor in the Chair of Peter and it is precisely in their last years that the essential personality differences between Pius and Paul as well as John become strikingly apparent. Until that time their lives and work were closely enough linked, to blur their individual roles in the process of change. The three lived into their eighties to die at different stages of the revolution, Pius and Paul embittered with self-reproach.

Roncalli who became John, however, was far from being a troubled person. Rather, he was an accommodating one. Willing to take another's name -an earlier John XXIII was declared an "anti-pope"- willing to take on a Council invented and worked out by a former Pope and call it his own, willing to proclaim as his an encyclical written by his predecessor and another by his successor and willing to follow the guidance of the man who would be Pope after him, Angelo Roncalli was the ideal "interim" choice.

Contact with the Modernists and their striving to create a new kind of Church, became part of his life early on. Growing to manhood during the demanding years of the Sarto pontificate, he was quickly drawn into the opposition, thanks to Msgr. Radini-Tedeschi who virtually adopted the poor country boy, seeing him through the local seminary, then on to ordination in Rome, after which he took him as private secretary. Those were the days before the Episcopal appointment of Radini-Tedeschi, when he still formed part of the Rampolla group along with Gasparri, Della Chiesa and the young Pacelli, all of whom where biding their time in the top office of the Vatican under the watchful eye of Pius X's Secretary of State, Rafael Cardinal Merry del Val.

When Radini-Tedeschi became Bishop of Bergamo, Roncalli went north with him and, since Bergamo and Brescia are not far apart, the young priest soon became involved in the political struggle of the Montini family. Giuditta Montini, activist mother of the future Pope Paul, appointed him chaplain of the union of women factory workers which she had organized and before long Roncalli was taking part in strike action. With the outbreak of the Great War he became an army chaplain assigned to duty at home in Bergamo and by the early 1920's he was teaching at the Lateran University in Rome.

If one considers the influences that surrounded Angelo Roncalli from an early age, the presence in his life of strongly committed men like RadiniTedeschi, Della Chiesa, Gasparri, it is small wonder that young Professor Roncalli became bedazzled by the writings of Rudolf Steiner, Zionist activist and ex-adept of Cardinal Rampolla's *Ordine Templi Orientis* who was, by the 1920's, promoting his own "anthroposophia", or that Roncalli began spicing his

theological lectures with Steiner theories. How strong was the reaction of Pope Ratti, Pius XI, when news reached him, one can only guess. However it is clear that the "grey eminence" in the Vatican, Secretary Gasparri, must have stepped in to save Roncalli from punishment or at least from punishment more severe than admission to the episcopate and banishment to nunciatures in the Balkans.

Exile was to last for nineteen years. The end of the first ten found Nuncio Roncalli in Istanbul where, according to the Milanese journalist; Pier Carpi, who claims to have absolute proof for the fact, he was initiated into Masonry attaining, like Pius IX, the 18th or Rosicrucian Degree. Unlike Pio Nono, however, Roncalli apparently never repented. In France today retired members of the gorgeously caparisoned Presidential *Garde Republicaine,* attest to the fact that from their post of duty in Paris during the mid-1940's they had been able to observe the Nuncio in civilian clothes leaving his residence to attend the Thursday evening meetings of the Grand Orient of France. Whereas exposure to such a dramatic conflict of loyalties would unnerve the average man, be he Catholic or Freemason, Angelo Roncalli seems to have taken it in stride.

As the Second World War came, Turkey proved to be the key spot from which to implement Pius XII's scheme to get Polish Jews past British check points as "Catholics" and into Palestine. Overcoming his initial objection to routing out the native Arabs in order to make room for European Jews, Roncalli was soon working obediently to produce the thousands of documents the Pope demanded. He was to show equal tractability in 1945 when his urgent plea to the same Pope to sue for peace in the face of the Russian advance

met with no response. Then it was, however, that his exile ended and he was ordered to pack his bags for Paris where, as Papal Nuncio, it was hoped he would be able to recycle the political thinking of the hundred French bishops accused of having collaborated with the Germans throughout the Occupation.

Biographers deny that the considerable Roncalli girth could have been due to epicurianism although they admit that his frequent receptions and elaborate dinner parties as handled by his talented chef, Roger, made the Paris Nunciature a favorite rendezvous of French politicians and *literati* along with the pioneer planners of a European Common Market. The hospitality continued when, at 73, he took his last diplomatic post, that of Vatican envoy to Paris-based UNESCO. Two years later at the age when bishops are now asked to retire, he was given his first real Episcopal assignment as Archbishop-Patriarch, or Cardinal, of Venice.

By this time, the mid-1950's, the leading figures of the future Second Vatican Council were preparing to move into position. Montini had become a bishop and was resident in Milan. During the next five years he and Roncalli would be in constant touch as they prepared to implement Pius XII's plans for a Council.

Although the election of Angelo Roncalli to the papacy did not go uncontested, its aspect as a temporary measure was patent. Even so, the 78 year-old Pontiff tackled his new duties with youthful energy, holding no fewer than five consistories in order to bring the long-neglected College of Cardinals up to full strength. Archbishop Montini's frequent attendance at the international symposia of liberal-minded bishops and theologians helped him to provide the new Pope with a short list of candidates for the red hat, men who would be sure to push the Council toward certification of the revolution.

Pope John XXIII died before the certificates, the Vatican II Documents, were signed. However. aside from his grave illness, there is no evidence that his last years were clouded. Even if he could have seen the future he could excuse himself for his part in the debacle. He had only done what he had been asked to do. The responsibility was Pacelli's and would be Montini's. He had only tried to be accommodating, never claiming to be himself the "Light" but only "the herald of the Light".

## *Pius XII*

In contrast, the final years of both Eugenio Pacelli and Giovanni Montini were burdened with tragedy. Pacelli was strong enough to withstand it, Montini clearly was not. With Pacelli it was not what he had done to the Church that plagued him; not much of that became apparent during his lifetime. It was rather what his lifelong commitment to the politics of the Left had helped to do to the world.

Malachi Martin, whose copious writings on the Church tend to be stronger on fiction than fact, may well have set down very cogent facts in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Church* when he described conversations between the aged Pope and the still older Cardinal Bea. Martin had been a young *peritus* assisting Bea during the first part of the Council and it is likely that the German took to reminiscing with his staff at the end of the day. According to Martin, Pius XII kept insisting that Bea answer one repeated and terrible question: did Bea think he, the wartime Pope, had made a mistake to have assessed Hitler as a greater menace to the world than Stalin? Had he chosen the wrong side in the

war? Had he made a terrible mistake? Bea tried to console him, "But how could we have known the Anglo-Saxons would let Russia go so far?" Pius was not comforted. He would only repeat. "We should have known, we should have known!"

An added cause for dismay during his last years was the loss of the man who had been nearest to his work for over twenty years. He knew however, that if Montini was to carry the Church on his shoulders in the difficult post-Conciliar days, he would have to gain pastoral experience and be able to work on his own. A further consideration must have been the mobility accorded Montini by his separation from Rome. In the decisive series of international conferences to be attended by insiders, the prelates and theologians working toward a Council, he was able to take part simply as an Italian bishop rather than as the Pope's right-hand man.

Throughout the 1950's, alone and tormented, Pius XII turned inward. He held no more consistories although the College of Cardinals had fallen to the low number of fifty-seven. As for the Secretariat of State, there had been no proper head of that department for ten years, not since the death of Msgr. Maglione. Pius had taken on some of the work himself, allowing Tardini and Montini to do the rest. After Montini was transferred to Milan, Tardini fell ill and for much of the time rarely showed up at his office. Suspended were the so-called *intabella* audiences by which the Pope made himself available at fixed hours of fixed days to cardinals, bishops, heads of Curial congregations and religious orders, so that he became virtually inaccessible. Vatican observer, Corrado Pallenberg, commented at the time that it was more difficult for a man like Cardinal Tisserant to obtain an audience than say, diplomat Clare Booth Luce or even actor Gary Cooper.

A strange aspect of the those years of papal retirement was the interest of Pius XII in rejuvenation as practiced by his good friend Paul Niehaus, a Swiss Protestant minister, 33-Degree Mason and "cellular therapist". The Niehaus system consisted in the injection of the living cells of animal fetuses. He claimed to be able to halt a spate of degenerative diseases with one injection. The Pope took three and would have continued had his personal physician not forbidden it. An obituary in the New York Times of February 5, 1972 cites Dr. Tito Ceccherini, the Pacelli family physician, as Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of the Free Masons of Scottish Rite in the 1950's, rising to Grand Master of all Masonic Rites four years before he died. A kind of pope within Masonry?.

In comparison with his two successors, Pius XII was a giant among popes. Although he would not have been one to weep, whatever the extent of his anguish, there is evidence that it was very great. In the last lines of a series of articles written to commemorate the centenary of the birth of the "Angelic Pastor" Fr. Virgilio Rotondi, a member of the editorial staff of the Jesuit review *Civiltà Cattólica,* noting that he had at one point been in daily touch with Pius XII due to the latter's interest in the Company's Movement for a Better World, confessed he was dumbfounded one day to hear the Pope say, "Pray for me Father, pray that I do not got to Hell!"

Rotondi, who admitted he considered Pius XII to have been a saint, might have consoled the aged Pacelli with the observation that whatever he had done throughout his life had been conditioned from infancy. He had hardly been given a choice. Since childhood, since the very day the two

year-old Eugenio had been taken to the bedside of the dying Pio Nono and heard the Pope tell his father that the little one would grow up to be of great value to the Vatican, his father had set out to make him a pope. Tutored at home, the boy was allowed no classroom contacts. Then, as if the whole Vatican sensed this preparation of an heir apparent, Eugenio was handed over to Cardinal Rampolla who chose the Capranica's Modernist curriculum, again to be taken apart from normal school life. After ordination Fr. Pacelli became the constant companion of Rampolla as his private secretary. When not traveling, his close associates inside the Vatican were those of the Rampolla "team", Della Chiesa, Gasparri, Radini-Tedeschi and the young Roncalli. Thus the whole pattern of his thinking and believing had been set for him long before he met up with the highly politicized Giovanni Montini. A major miracle on the order of the one experienced by St. Paul on the road to Damascus or the Emperor Constantine on the Milvio Bridge might have dissuaded him from embracing the revolution, but nothing less.

In 1958, while the worldwide effects of his wartime political choice continued to appall him, Eugenio Pacelli would die with his hope for a new kind of Catholic Church intact. Giovanni Battista Montini, his longtime co-transformer, would be able to see it through.

Readers who are dismayed at finding Pius XII named as the chief protagonist of change, do well to read again the last page. The phrase, "he hardly had a choice" is an apology for Pacelli, the man. Pacelli, Pope, is another matter.

The family had come to Rome in the early 1800's at the bidding of the House of Rothschild. Is it reasonable to suppose that the astute Frankfurt bankers would entrust to a "goy" a key part of their thrust across Europe, that of bringing the Papal States firmly into their orbit? To Jews who practiced Catholicism, yes.

It is one thing to admit of Jewish success in money matters, politics and culture, then to refuse to believe in their penetration into the Vatican. However, we have all seen photographs of Paul VI wearing the Ephod of the High Priest of Jerusalem. In the directory of Italian nobility at the headquarters of the Knights of Malta in Rome one finds a mutation under the name Montini, several generations back, from the Jewish name, Benedetti. The Benedettis of today with the Banco di Roma, Olivetti, etc., can be called the Rockefellers of Italy.

There is no reason, as Teresa of Avila proved, why a Jew cannot become a great Catholic saint, except for early conditioning. To Jewish Peter and Paul we owe the beginnings of Christianity. However, the adult life of the Pacelli child, as well as the Montini child, indicate training that endowed them with an all-embracing loyalty that was not Catholic. Otherwise, why were they isolated from their peers, all Catholics in Italy? Poor health? Unlikely. Isolation was to last for Eugenio into his studies for the priesthood. Then immediately on ordination he began to live the strenuous life of Mariano, Cardinal Rampolla, who moonlighted work as Secretary of State with duty as Grand Master of the occult *Ordo Templi Orientis*. In like fashion, the privately educated, supposedly delicate Giovanni Montini was sent off to face the hardships of war-devastated Poland immediately on ordination.

The close partnership of Pacelli and Montini must have owed its long duration to their shared background, making for intense political commitment. Even as Secretary of State, Pacelli was composing the two vernacular encyclicals attributed to Pius XI , *Non Abbiamo Bisogno* and *Mit Brennender Sorge,* the latter smuggled into Germany to be privately printed, hardly a papal way to do things. As Secretary, he stopped the popular broadcasts in America of Fr. Charles Coughlin, which were exposing Jewish international financial power.

The Second World War had hardly begun when Pacelli, now Pius XII, was writing atrocity propaganda against Germany for Jesuit-run Vatican Radio. By 1940 he was absorbing and exposing revelations by a double agent of the coming *Blitzkrieg*.

Obviously this strong political bias, inculcated from childhood, made it impossible for Pope Pius XII to fulfill the role of neutral, compassionate Holy Father to each and every Catholic.

While the faithful remained unaware of these political initiatives, news of his peremptory repression of the crusade of volunteers ready to fight atheistic Russia must have swept across the youth of continental Europe as a violent shock. The granting of hundreds of thousands of false baptismal certificates to deceive immigration officers in British Palestine was a degradation of the sacred, while the pleas of 65 million Roman Catholics of Eastern Europe to raise the papal voice in an effort to save them from the oncoming Soviet hoards, met with adamant refusal... "until Germany totally reverses its policy toward the Jews." His priority: Jews, not Catholics.

Although there is ample evidence that the Sanhedrin did not loosen its hold on the Chair of Peter after the Pacelli and Montini papacies, that would have to be the subject of another book and another year in Italy to convert evidence into proof.

As for Montini, probably the high point of his life was when, on that cold, clear December noon in 1965, as he emerged from the Basilica of St. Peter in procession with the bishops of the world, safe in the knowledge that the revolution had been signed and sealed, he found the 83 year-old Jacques Maritain waiting on the church steps to embrace him. From that moment the remaining twelve years of his life were to run downhill.

For the public Montini lacked both the ethereal charisma of Pacelli and the earthy charm of Roncalli. As the blows of reaction to the Council began to strike, fringes of the public pushed at him from both sides so that gradually his rather dapper North Italian efficiency started to show a nervous dislocation. Even as a minority on the Right prayed under his window for a return of the Mass, a minority on the Left was protesting his encyclical *Humanae Vitae*. The late Scottish Catholic commentator, Hamish Fraser (ex-Communist), saw a link between the two causes, suggesting that the reason for the publication of that essentially superfluous document – (Catholics had no need to be told that artificial birth control was tabu) – was to put conservative Catholics in a pro-Vatican frame of mind when, a short while afterward, the New Mass was thrust upon them.

As if to escape the growing dissent, Pope Paul began a series of travels such as no Roman pontiff had yet undertaken. He journeyed to Jerusalem, to Manila, Sidney, Hongkong and to Bogotá for the CELAM congress. In New York he told the assembly of the United

Nations that they were "the last best hope of Man" and he begged the world to recognize the Church's new humanism. "We, too, more than any others, do venerate Man." Man reaching the moon took him yet further: "Honor to human courage! Honor to the synthesis of the scientific and organizational activity of Man, king of the earth and now prince of the heavens!"

On this upward note Paul VI went on to exalt the World Council of Churches meeting in Kenya. To a Wednesday audience crowd, "Oh, if I had wings I would fly to Nairobi, to that assembly of 271 Churches. Think of it, 271 Christian Churches!" Holy Year 1975 brought extraordinary celebrations planned by Augustin Bea's heir, Jan Cardinal Willebrands, the persistent Dutchman who had been sent by Pope John to Moscow to invite Orthodox observers to attend the Council. Willebrands reminded Paul that his great teacher, Pius XII, had predicted that "a new and letificante Pentecost" would come upon the Church and here it was in the form of some ten thousand "born-again" Catholics from all over the world, members of Catholic Charismatic Renewal.

Paul VI began to find himself in strange company. Coming to the Vatican was Rodman Williams of the Melodyland School of Theology in Anaheim California, South African Dr. David du Plessis, known as "Mr. Pentecost", head of the World Pentecostal Council, the Anglican Pentecostal leader, Michael Harper and the German, Arthur Bittlinger. Greeting them in private audience he assured them that they had been "dealing with spiritual resources of which the whole human family has urgent need. Let us walk together, listening with docility and care to what the Spirit is saying today and ready to move into the future with joy and trust."

Then on Pentecost Sunday thousands of Catholics who had taken to "Charismatic Renewal" poured into St. Peter's. Mostly from the United States but also from Ireland, Canada, India, Mexico and a dozen more countries, they went through a morning as bizarre and a good deal more delirious than Pope John Paul's extravaganza ten years later at Assisi. The Charismatics, mostly middle-aged, stood facing the great twisted Bernini columns of the main altar, one arm waving, the other holding Japanese transistors on high while all over the marble floor thousands of others sat huddled in circles, arms entwined. Suddenly there came a loud microphoned male voice. Even in Michigan accents its message was portentious: "Know that I, your God, brought Peter and Paul to Rome to witness to my glory. Now I, your God, have chosen to bring you to Rome. Listen, my people. I speak to you of the dawn of a new age! My Church will be different. My people will be different. Prepare yourselves. Open your eyes! Open your eyes!"

Seven hundred Catholic priests, mostly American and newly converted to the cult, concelebrated at the papal altar with starry-eyed Cardinal Suenens of Malines-Brussels. The priests moved down the center aisle giving out communion wafers by the fistful to be passed from hand to hand, many of them falling to the floor. Then, from a small side altar came the voice of the Pope. After a ten-minute paean of praise for the Charismatic movement, he flung up his arms shouting "Jesus is Lord! Hallelujah!"

Paul's euphoria was short-lived. Within a few months he had lapsed into dejection once more, asking a bewildered general audience, "Have we offended those who rebel and who defect? We want to assure them that was not our intention and that we will want to be the first to ask them to forgive us." Those words, so out of key with his station, were

said just ten years after the great moment of the Maritain embrace at the conclusion of the Council. The course of Maritain's Integral Humanism has reached its logical conclusion. A Church that asks for nothing receives nothing and Paul VI, like the amiable Church he and Saul Alinsky had projected, was breaking down. As conditioned as Pacelli had been by his parents, his training, his associations and above all by his long Vatican partnership with Pacelli, Giovanni Montini was showing clearly that he was unable to endure what it was adding up to.

As he continued to lose courage his pronouncements grew more and more dramatic. He called the defection of priests his "crown of thorns". More than once he thought of resigning, according to a posthumous report of his confessor, Paolo Dezza, S.J. He began to lace his sermons with reference to a character the brave new Church had long since done away with, the Devil. "Satan's smoke has made its way into the temple of God through some crack" he said and "there has been the intervention of a hostile power, an alien agent, a mysterious being, the Devil."

The *New York Times,* reporting an incredible discourse to a crowded congregation of tourists in St. John Lateran, told of "the frail looking 76 year-old Pontiff speaking in quavering tones, near to tears, `Who is speaking to you? A poor man, a phenomenon of smallness. I tremble, my brethren and children. I tremble because I am feeling things to say that are immensely larger than I am... But I am the successor of St. Peter. Accept me. Do not despise me. I am the Vicar of Christ."'

Harking back to his days as chaplain to the FUCI when he had urged Roman students to defy the Mussolini government, he finally put aside his identity as Pope by making a public offer to the Red Brigades of the

person of Gianbattista Montini in exchange for their hostage, Aldo Moro, one-time FUCI leader and several times Prime Minister of Italy. The offer was ignored. Moro's murder and Montini's death occurred not long afterward. The year was 1978.

## *John Paul I*

**A member of the Vatican press corps, the author witnessed at close range the going of Paul VI, the coming and going of John Paul I and the coming of John Paul II. Many of the following notes were made at the time.**

The death of two popes within fifty-four days made of the second half of the year 1978 one of the most dramatic periods in modern Church history.

Although Paul VI was over 80 and had long been said to suffer from a number of ailments, his death, like every death, came as a shock. *Vaticanisti,* the journalists who specialize in Vatican affairs, rushed back to Rome from August holidays at beach and mountain resorts. Cardinals, kings, queens and heads of state arrived to attend what turned out to be strangely austere funeral rites. On a carpet spread over flagstones on St. Peter's Square the coffin lay

bare of crucifix, candle or flower, accompanied only by a great open book whose pages flapped disconsolately in a light wind.

A conclave, the first from which 80 year-old cardinals were excluded, voted in newly enforced secrecy with startling rapidity. In an interview given to a Milan newspaper at the time Archbishop Lefebvre commented, "A conclave coming to perfect agreement in so short a time must have been well worked out, even before the seals were put on the doors".

Albino Luciani, Patriarch of Venice, a bland and docile functionary of the changing Church was able to cause a flurry in his month as Pope if only because his was a new and cheerful face in the Vatican. Everywhere there seemed to be a feeling of relief, even of hope. While a few traditionalist voices contended there was no Pope because members of an incomplete conclave led by their most progressive elements had chosen one of their number and one who refused to be crowned, a certain traditionalist voice, that of the usually perceptive Abbé Georges de Nantes, hailed the new Pope, on Heaven knows what grounds, as a second Pius X. It was a time of wild talk and inaccurate reporting.

Albino Luciani was a protégée of Angelo Roncalli. The two had come into contact in 1953 when Roncalli left UNESCO in Paris to take on the Patriarchate of Venice. The younger man's work of organizing congresses and conferences for the Bishop of Belluno brought him often to nearby Venice. That the future Pope John came to see in the priest promising talent for the changing Church is clear from the fact that one of his first acts as Pope was to consecrate Fr. Luciani a bishop in St. Peter's with his own hands. Soon afterward when he announced

the Council, he set up the two preparatory commissions, the official group whose two years of work would end in the trash can and the inner group of "experts", among them Msgr. Luciani.

How the new Bishop arrived at the status of *peritus* came out in an interview the Italian writer Alfonso Strpellone gave to Rome's *Il Messaggero* at the time of Luciani's death. He said the Patriarch had told him one day during the Council that he had undergone what he called a "severe spiritual crisis" which, fortunately, he had been able to overcome." He told me that until quite recently he had accepted and promoted the concept held by the Holy Office that within the Church only truth had rights. Then, as he confided to friends, he became convinced that he had been mistaken, after which he agreed, not without a certain torment and hesitation, to take an active part in the formulation of the document on Religious Freedom, one of the fundamental texts of the Second Vatican Council." This is the decree making religious belief a matter of choice or, as it asserts, a matter of conscience, a decree conservative Council Fathers refused to sign.

Formulations of the decree were done under the tutelage of Augustin, (later Cardinal) Bea and on its acceptance in Council there came a spate of interfaith panels in various parts of the world, the most important series taking place in Venice throughout the decade. The Rev. Phillip Potter, West Indian head of the World Council of Churches at the time of Luciani's election, remembered a long association: "Oh yes", he told the press, "I know the new Pope. We have had the Joint Working Committee (on ecumenism) since 1965. Cardinal Willebrands and I were house-guests in Venice when he was Patriarch and I remember

very well the speech which he gave the group in 1974 concerning his convictions about the positive value of ecumenism. Certainly he was very open in his attitude. Then there is the fact of his refusal of crown and throne. It demonstrates clearly the evolution taking place in the Catholic Church and it shows up the personality of the new Pope."

The sudden death of Albino Luciani remains shrouded in mystery. Of the two young papal secretarries, the Irish Fr. John Magee, who was said to have found the body, refused to speak to reporters, while the other, the Italian Diego Lorenzi, greeted them with "Have you, too come to ask how he was poisoned?" There was a second funeral sans crucifix, candle or flower, this time in pouring rain, another conclave and another Pope John Paul.

Granted that much of the data on the life, work and death of Pope Luciani was available only in Italian and French and that journalists coming from abroad for the papal funerals and elections were usually not proficient in either language, it was still baffling how wide of the mark most of them hit. The Pulitzer Prize winner and veteran *Washington Star* correspondent, Mary McCrory, managed to cram no less than seven glaring errors into a short report. For the record:

(1) "One of Luciani's virtues was his lack of Curia connections." Wrong. He himself had long been a member of one of the most important Curial bodies, the Sacred Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship.

(2) "He was rarely seen in Rome." Wrong. He worked in Rome as *peritus* all during the Council and he was constantly in and out of Rome during the three years he acted as Vice President of the Italian Episcopal Conference.

(3) "During his student days at the 'Greg'..." He never attended the Gregorian University, having obtained permission to pursue their courses in Belluno where he was assisting the Bishop.

(4) "He succeeded Pope John as Patriarch of Venice." Wrong. Roncalli left Venice to become Pope in 1958 and Luciani became Patriarch in 1971.

(5) "He is reported to have been open-minded about the anti-conception pill until *Humanae Vitae"*. It was the other way around. He conformed when the document was published and afterward sent a plea to Pope Paul to reconsider a legitimate use of the pill.

(6) "Luciani seems never to have traveled outside of Italy." As bishop he traveled a good deal within Europe, being one of the few Italians invited to take part in meetings with Germany's avant-garde bishops and theologians, as they worked on preparation for the Council. He also traveled to Brazil several times and once to South Africa.

(7) Finally, the article cites the Pope's early "total immersion" in poverty. This abject poverty theme ("dirt poor", as Rabbi Tannenbaum called it) stemmed from a few words in the first biographical handout at the Vatican and it was touched up from pen to pen. The Pope's brother, Eduardo, finally evinced impatience with it. "We were no worse off than anyone else", he told *Il Tempo*. Nobody had it easy in the 1920's in the northern region of Veneto, which had been Austrian and which found no place in the feeble Italian economy of the first years after the Great War. Mussolini undertook a partial solution by draining the Pontine marshes south of Rome and inviting Venetians to settle there. To this day among old people you can hear the singsong accent of the Veneto region. As for the Luciani family dwelling where the Pope was born, a photograph shows it to be a substantial three-story house. Brother Eduardo has long been president of the local Chamber of Commerce.

While foreign reporting of John Paul I's life was laced with fantasy, foreign reporting of his death was seemingly devoid even of curiosity. It was remarkable how little the eight hundred or so journalists milling around in the Vatican press rooms at the time seemed to care how the sudden death had occurred. Among ordinary Italians, the market people, taxi drivers ad so on, there was plenty of talk. There was also a publicity-seeking, unanswered plea for an autopsy by a pseudo traditionalist group in Rome. But for foreign journalists it was apparently enough that the Vatican had spoken. The trouble was, the Vatican had not spoken definitively. When Pope Paul died, a bulletin was issued to the press which consisted of a simple announcement of the event. Death had occurred at a certain moment on a certain day and there followed a one sentence explanation of the cause in generic terms. The next day another brief bulletin was issued, detailing in precise medical terms the cause of the death. A few hours after the body of John Paul I was found, the press office gave out the first type of bulletin, but the second, the medical report, was never issued. To this reporter's question concerning the missing release, the press chief, Fr. Romero Panciroli, replied that, since the news bulletin had been given out, it had been deemed unnecessary to issue a second bulletin. Italian law would have demanded an autopsy, however since 1929 when Cardinal Gasparri and Prime Minister Mussolini signed the Lateran Treaty, Vatican City State has been another and sovereign country.

Albino Luciani was still in his sixties at the time of his death and he was an Italian with friends and relatives available for interviews. Local reporters lost no time. They sought

out a sister who insisted that a recent routine medical check-up had given her brother a perfectly normal cardiograph. She said that not only had he never suffered from a weak heart, neither had anyone in his family. A priest who had acted as Luciani's private secretary during his years as Patriarch in Venice, attested to the fact that every Saturday noon, right up to the papal election, the two men had gone off to the mountains to spend hours in strenuous hiking. Cardinal Colombo of Milan expressed bewilderment at his friend's sudden death, testifying that he had received a telephone call from the Pope only five hours before the body was discovered and that he seemed to be in the best of health and spirits, "He told me that the first weeks of confusion were definitely over and that at last he felt he was really getting on top of things."

There were conflicting reports about who found the body. Was it Fr. Magee or was it one of the housekeeper nuns? There were conflicting reports about what the Pope was reading before he died. These were not rumors but contrasting Vatican press reports following one after the other. But the most telling fact was the distressing swelling of the body as it lay in state at the high altar in St. Peter's, making enclosure, in the coffin necessary much earlier than had been planned. Cardiologists interviewed in the Roman press at the time agreed that such a phenomenon does not occur in cases of ordinary heart failure.

If indeed all the evidence points to foul play, why did it happen? How does such an event fit into the thesis of this study? Surely Albino Luciani, once he had settled his "spiritual crisis", became an enthusiastic participant in the Vatican revolution. His Venice residence and other ecclesiastical building along the canals became the focus of Protestant-Catholic dialogue,

of Jewish consultations, of far-out Jesuit speculations on "Discerning of Spirits" and, above all, of the Vatican's and the Cardinal Willebrands efforts to bring together the Catholic Charismatics and the Protestant Assembly of God. Chairperson for many of the events was the energetic Rosemary Goldie who had directed affairs at San Calisto before the Council and who subsequently rose to Curial status.

Why would a Pope as faithful to the main thrusts of the present Vatican be removed from the scene? Making up reasons is still a favorite pastime of Left and Right. Even the Vatican has gotten into the game by sponsoring the version of the journalist John Cornwell in which Luciani was virtually at the point of death when elected, a fiction. running contrary to all available evidence at the time. Cornwell goes on to bite the hand that fed him by accusing the Vatican of letting the poor man die of neglect. Given what Prof. Jean Meyer called the Vatican's complex of self-persecution, the accusation must be gratifying.

Crazy theories were flying around in 1978: the new Holy Father was going to restore the old Mass when every Venetian knew he had worked to prevent that Mass being said by Lefebvre priests at San Simeone Piccolo. The Holy Father was going to clean up chicanery in the Vatican Bank. The last fantasy, developed some years later by writer David Yallop, made of his *In God's Name* an international best-seller. That this quiet, submissive priest with no known history of interest in economics, startled at being elected Pope would, in his very first uncertain weeks in the post, resolve to take on a struggle against the whole Vatican financial establishment is as patently absurd as the Cornwell thesis is patently false.

The sudden death, apparently by poison, of Pope Luciani may well remain a mystery. Some *Vaticanisti* have speculated that

among the electors of 1978, certain insiders around the König faction, dismayed at the weak choice, pushed through by the Benelli faction, were determined to correct the situation and at any cost.

As an epitaph for the essentially pathetic figure of John Paul I there is a curious sentence at the end of one of the little essays he was fond of writing for *Il Gazzettino di Venezia*. It can be taken both as a tribute to his mentors, Roncalli and Willebrands, and as an apology for the life he chose freely "if not without a certain torment and hesitation": "Better be the confident of great ideas than the inventor of mediocre ones; he who has risen on the shoulders of another sees further than the other although he himself may be smaller".

## and ***John Paul II***

The second Pope John Paul came on the scene with a flourish and a heartening shout, *"Laudatur Jesus Christus!"* Here was no functionary but a protagonist. It was not long before the bouyancy and enthusiasm of the "foreign" Pope was bringing unprecedented crowds to Rome and in subsequent months uncountable throngs to the parks and plazas of Poland, Ireland, the United States, Mexico and Brazil. Even some traditional Catholics fell under his spell. Long deprived, they saw mirages in words and deeds they deemed positive and turned away from looking at the rest.

As in the case of Albino Luciani, transformed by the image-makers from a willing ecumenist and spiritual son of liberal John XIII into a courageous fighter for financial reform and liturgical tradition, the process of recycling the biography of Karol Wojtyla began even before he left St. Peter's balcony on the night of his election. Once his name was announced there was a frantic exodus of reporters from the piazza into the adjacent press rooms to telephone and telex the news while those who had no need to file that night gathered around a closed-circuit television screen in the press hall.

Almost before the new Pope had finished his initial greeting to the crowd from high over the central portal of the Basilica, the efficient press office of Fr. Panciroli had produced a two-page mimeographed biography in Italian and a few minutes later versions in four other languages including Polish. Simultaneously a TV cameraman was picking out a middle-aged journalist as he emerged from the long line of telephone booths. It was Jerszy Turowitz, editor of Poland's government-related Catholic press group, *Znak*. Even as we were reading in the hand-out that Karol Wojtyla's father had been a worker, Turowitz was saying on the TV screen, "No, not a worker, an army officer. Not a high-ranking one but, yes, an officer. How long have I known the new Pope? Oh for many, many years, since long before the Council."

The hundred or so newsmen watching the screen caught Turowitz' words but scores more were already sending the bulletin's mistake out to the world.

What does it matter how the father of a pope earned the family bread? To the Church nothing at all. The office is elective, not hereditary. Cardinal Ottaviani, the prelate, twice *papabile* who, in his long lifetime, became a symbol of Right-wing conservatism, was the son of a butcher in the poor Trastevere quarter of Rome. But that a

mistake was made in the case of the present Pope, a never corrected mistake, is indication of an attempt at political image-making.

Admittedly, biographical material is not easy to obtain from a Communist country; however if one pieces together what data has become available in an honest way he can go far toward delineating the character of the man chosen by his peers to carry on the transformation of the Catholic Church.

As Turowitz indicated, Karol Wojtyla's father was not a workman nor yet a peasant, but a soldier. The little we can learn about Josef Wojtyla throws a great deal of light on the future orientation of his son. But for the particular strivings and self discipline of the father, it is doubtful that Karol would have gone half as far as he did.

Early in 1979 some enterprising Central European reporter uncovered the registry of Lt. Wojtyla in the military archives of Imperial Vienna. Galicia, the province of Poland the family came from, was part of the Hapsburg Empire between 1772 an 1918. The record shows that the father of the future John Paul was born in the village of Lipsik, the son of a tailor. From the fact that he entered the army as a private in the infantry we must assume that he had little schooling. That he did not become a soldier until he was 21 indicates an adolescence in apprenticeship to his father and that when he decided to enter on a military career, although he would have to begin at rock bottom, it was because it meant escape from a lifetime of cutting black Sunday suits for the farmers around Lipsik.

Josef Wojtyla did well in the army, moving from corporal to non-commissioned officer. He spoke, says the document, both Polish and German fluently and he was a rapid typist.

Described as five feet six with chestnut hair and blond moustache, he is seen in photographs to have had narrow, rather severe features in contrast to his second son, Karol, born when he was already 41 years of age. Emilia Kacz-Orowsika, his wife, had the wide, friendly face of the future Pope and his sturdy build.

By the end of 1914, Wojtyla had left the typewriter for the battlefield. At that time Austrian forces were engaged in containing a major Russian advance until Germans under Von Mackenson could arrive to help them push through to the East.

In 1916 Wojtyla received the Military Cross First Class at the hands of Kaiser Franz Josef himself. Three years later the post-war Polish Republic awarded him with the rank of Lieutenant and by the spring of the following year when Karol was born, the family was living in part of a pleasant house in the larger town of Wadowice.

Lt. Wojtyla, who had left the village tailor shop by one of the few paths open to a youth of little money or education in the very settled society of the Empire, must have wanted for his children the advantages he had lacked. His first son, Edvard, born ten years earlier than Karol took a doctorate in medicine at the University of Krakow where, only 24, he died after taking part in a clinical experiment with scarlet fever bacilli.

The 1930's found the high school student, Karol, living alone with his father after the death of his mother, brother and little sister. An interview appearing in Rome's *Il Tempo* brings us into those days. Jerszy Kluger, an engineer many years a resident of Rome, had been a companion of Karol Wojtyla from early childhood through high school and a constant visitor to the two-room ground

floor apartment on Kalnin Street. He gives a telling description of his friend's father: "A man of great dignity and wide culture. He retired early from the army in order to dedicate himself to scholarship. As a matter of fact he was writing a history of the Catholic Church in Poland. Whether or not it was ever published, I don't know. But I remember there was a calmness about him, a serenity..."

As for Wadowice, Kluger says, the town counted around ten thousand people, two thousand of whom were Jews. His own father was head of the Jewish community, a liberal, active in politics. "Life was not easy for us during the between-wars period in the Polish Republic with everybody ready to give offense to Jews and to strike at our sensibilities. But the Wojtyla's were not like the others."

Kluger lent the Rome reporter his graduation picture, a photograph taken in June 1938. Karol, seen standing in the front row was, Kluger said, "always first in the class. Not that he studied more; it was just that he was a genius."

The lycée was not Catholic. There are no priests in the row of professors, however the choice of putting his son in a secular school was probably not deliberate, as in the case of the father of Pius XII. There were probably no Catholic schools anywhere near Wadowice. The Hapsburg Empire had been so permeated with Catholicism that specifically denominational schools were hardly necessary, either then or after independence came. That the Wadowice school drew boys of upper class families is evident from another Kluger photograph, that of a class reunion ten years later. Here we find one priest, Fr. Wojtyla, standing among a group of prosperous-looking young men and their quite fashionably dressed wives.

So much for the myth that began with the Vatican press bulletin's "son of a worker" going on to "an impoverished

worker of peasant origin" to end up with Massachusetts Governor King's tribute to the visiting Pope who, he said, had "come up from the coal mines of his beloved Poland."

Accounts of the university years are as remarkable for contradictions as the first stage and as overladen with purposeful invention. Following the spring graduation, father and son moved to the beautiful old university city of Krakow, thirty miles away. By autumn Karol was attending the letters faculty, specializing in languages and literature. The next year, 1939, must have been one of the most traumatic in his life. His father died and the Second World War began, precisely in Poland. After the three-week campaign and conquest Krakow became headquarters for the German General Governorship and Karol, of military age, became liable for a call-up to labor corps duty in Germany. To avoid having to leave Krakow and his studies, he and a fellow student, Julius Kydrynski, with whom he shared a room after his father's death, managed to find part-time jobs in a local lime quarry. According to Kydrynski, today a well known Polish writer, regular workers at the quarry pampered the two gently-bred students, only gradually letting them tackle the hard stone smashing work and, he says, it was not many days before Karol had managed to advance to an indoor job where the operation was directed by a kind of primitive remote control system.

According to the pious panegyrics of the Vatican's election-night bulletin, Karol was at that time "dedicating himself actively to the religious and cultural formation of the other workers". But the man closest to him at that time, his room-mate, told the Australian reporter, James Oram, "Karol was a practicing Catholic. By that I mean he went to church on Sunday. But I would call his thinking liberal. Religion was certainly not his main interest in those days."

Several friends from the war years attest to the fact that

his all-pervading passion was for the theater. He had met Julius at a university poetry-reading session and out of such encounters he and several other students, along with an out-of-work professional actor or two, organized a small semi-professional company which performed in the larger salons of private houses, young Karol usually playing the leading role. Seven plays made up the repertory of the troupe and, contrary to many stories, the plays were not chosen to promote religion, to glorify Poland nor yet to condemn Germany. They were simply good, solid contemporary dramas, theater for the sake of theater. Typical was *The Quail* by a successful Polish dramatist of the time in which Karol played a rough peasant whose wife reciprocated the love of a finer, more sensitive man.

Subsequently, he and several actors in the group which called itself *Dramatic Studio 39*, reorganized themselves into a company to recite epic poetry from Polish literature, both classic and nineteenth century. They performed on the stark, bare stage that had been considered avant-garde in Germany during the pre-Hitler days of the Weimar Republic. Years later as Bishop, his keen interest in the theater continuing, he would theorize on the advantage of reducing theater to the spoken word in order to challenge the imagination of the spectator. Perhaps this penchant for Weimar starkness accounts for Pope John Paul's preference for the pared-down rituals of the Conciliar Church.

Of all the invented stories about the Wojtyla university years, the one about his participation in underground political activism is the most farfetched, when one considers that he was leading a life which demanded a public presence from early morning until midnight. He began the day with classes, went on to the job, quarry or, later, chemicals, then to theatrical rehearsals or late evening performances.

From the fact that as Bishop and Cardinal, Wojtyla would come to interpret Catholic doctrine in the light of the German existentialists, it must be concluded that, rather than attempting sabotage of the Occupation forces, he was probably learning from them. Admitting that defeat for his country must have gone hard with an officer's son, his unusual vigor and curiosity would have impelled him to profit by whatever contacts the situation offered. At a time of foreign military occupation a great deal more give and take goes on, particularly at the youth level, than meets the headlines. It is a matter of record that among the members of the SS units stationed in France during World War II, 80% were not Germans but young Frenchmen. It is also true that from the cultural interchange of those years — symposia, lectures and so on — young Frenchmen of an intellectual bent were absorbing from the occupying Germans an enthusiasm for the misty philosophical concepts of their mentor; Martin Heidegger, and that those concepts would dominate not only France's postwar literature through Jean Paul Sartre and Albert Camus but would come to pervert Catholic orthodoxy through the influential writings of a whole group of theologians headed by Karl Rahner, S.J., a pupil of Martin Heidegger.

Advanced centers of learning, even in peace-time, can be centers of political agitation. Quite naturally Krakow University would not settle down in wartime. Accordingly, it was closed for the duration, along with other Polish universities and seminaries. Study went on in private, but not in secret.

Just when Karol Wojtyla decided to become a priest is not clear. There are recurrent mentions in articles and books of a small group of students meeting regularly with one Jan Tyranowski. Like Karol's grandfather, he was a

tailor by profession. Says Malachi Martin, "this uneducated tailor was the single biggest influence in Wojtyla's life." Some say the sessions consisted of Scripture reading but J. Malinski in *My Friend Karol Wojtyla* insists their content was not religious, at least not in the Catholic sense. Rather they promoted a kind of theosophical "know-thyself" philosophy, apparently along the lines of Rudolf Steiner, the Jewish thinker who had so fascinated young Angelo Roncalli.

In any case it was probably some time in 1943 that Karol put himself under the tutelage of the Archbishop and Metropolitan of Krakow, Prince Sapieha, who assigned him to a Thomist specialist for private theological study to be combined with periodic examinations.

As for the "clandestine seminary" story it must be put down to one more romantic falsification. It was on August 7, 1944 that Archbishop Sapieha, alarmed at news of a Russian breakthrough in the East and an imminent withdrawal of the German Occupation forces, invited the scattered candidates for the priesthood in his diocese to wait out the Soviet advance in the relative security of the Archepiscopal Palace, which he turned into a temporary boarding school. Thus it was not the "persecution by the Nazis" but rather their impending disappearance that was responsible for an improvised seminary in Krakow.

As the Germans retreated to leave all Poland to the mercy of the Soviet armies, whole populations were on the move. The palace seminary was not invaded but Krakow became the scene of grave disturbances six months after the new Occupation was complete. Before the war, Jews had accounted for 25% of the city's population, not a high figure for Poland where, according to the Jewish Encyclopedia, the figure reached 30% in Warsaw and 44%

in Lublin. In 1945 thousands of Krakow Jews who had fled to the Russian Zone at the initial German invasion were returning, many of the men having become Soviet commissars and police. Feeling was bitter among the Poles and it exploded on August 11, in a major pogrom in which 353 Jews of the city of Krakow were killed by the populace.

On the night of his election to the papacy John Paul II described himself as "a man from afar". In reality he must long have counted Rome as his second home, having traveled there for prolonged visits beginning in 1946. Metropolitan Sapieha that year was proving himself as adroit in dealing with the Russians as he had been with the Germans. In those terrible months, called "zero year" by the defeated when, as a result of the pogrom, Krakow had been put into a virtual police strait jacket and only Jews were allowed to leave the country, Karol Wojtyla, just ordained, was somehow permitted to leave for the West. By perilously patched railways he arrived in the Eternal City in time for the opening of the scholastic year.

Although shaken politically to its very roots, Rome had come through the war undamaged except for streets close to the Tiburtina railroad station where the Americans had dropped bombs. At the old "Angelicum", the Dominican University dedicated to the Order's great St. Thomas Aquinas, on the steep hill overlooking the Trajan Market the young priest from Poland was to study for two years. A half hour walk in those days would have taken him down through crowded streets to the Tiber bridges and on to the *Piazza di San Pietro* where he could hear the words of Pope Pius XII.

To read the works of St. John of the Cross, the subject of his thesis, he began the study of Spanish and we are

told that it was to improve his French that he decided to live at the Belgian College. While that is the possible reason it must also be remembered that ever since the days of Cardinal Mercier, Belgium with Louvain University and *Lumen Vitae,* was the leading center for radical theological ferment. The atmosphere at the Belgian College, with its frequent visitors from the homeland, cannot but have had a strong influence on the young Wojtyla. In summer he hitch-hiked to Belgium and to reunions of the Young Christian Workers International, the JCC. In Paris he frequented the *Mission de France,* the center of the worker-priest movement. J. Malinsky in describing those summers, refers to the Mission as a center "for young priests witnessing Christ in the service of men, eager to return the liturgy to its origins and dedicated to creating new structures for community prayer". In 1947 Fr. Wojtyla acted as Polish delegate to the Young Christian Workers Movement Congress in Geneva.

In Poland in 1948, seven hundred priests and more than that number of religious were imprisoned by Communist authorities. Nevertheless Fr. Wojtyla, returning that year, was assigned a parish in the village of Niegonic. The following year he was transferred to Krakow where he combined parish work with a government-approved chaplaincy at his old University. Each summer, quite on his own initiative, he organized weekend hiking trips among his students. At about that time he offered his first poems for publication under a pseudonym to the editor of *Tydgonik Powszchny,* Jerszy Turowitz, the journalist interviewed on Vatican TV the night of his election. This weekly was soon to be absorbed by the Pax pro-government movement under Boleslaw Piasaecki and Turowitz would go on to collaborate with Jerszy Zablocki in a Pax-related Catholic press network called *Znak* (Sign). Zablocki himself was subsequently awarded a cabinet post by Communist boss Gierek.

That Karol Wojtyla remained a supporter of both *Znak* and its editor, Turowitz, is attested by Dr. George Hunston Williams of Harvard who explains that when even Paul VI thought *Znak* articles were going too far regarding the Ukrainian Church, Cardinal Wojtyla explained to the Pope that *Znak's* downplaying of the Ukrainian Church in favor of the Soviet Orthodox Church was precisely the point of Cardinal Casaroli's *Ostpolitik* and something the Holy Father ought to support.

Although the Angelicum appears to have accepted the thesis on St. John of the Cross, there is no mention of a preliminary academic degree. In order to teach in Poland it was necessary for Fr. Wojtyla to spend two more years preparing a second thesis on the man-centered philosophy of Max Scheler, a German Jew who, after a few years as Catholic, reverted to a rigid atheism. In 1953 he became lecturer on moral theology at the University of Lublin and the following year added a similar course in Krakow. necessitating overnight travel between classes.

At the end of 1953 the Warsaw government abolished all theological studies at Krakow, leaving Lublin the only "Catholic" university behind the Iron Curtain. The institution has a curious history. In a sense, it owed its origin to Lenin. Eastern Poland had been Russian before 1918 and in the Orthodox State of the Tsars, Roman Catholic seminaries were considered trouble spots, particularly the school at Wilna which was finally ordered to move to Petrograd where it was to merge with a small theological academy already existing there. It was hoped Catholic seminarians would thus become easier to monitor. Immediately following the Russian Revolution the Rector, Fr. Idzi Rasziszewski, was received by Lenin who

welcomed the priest's offer to take the whole operation off his hands, by moving the combined school to Poland.

At that time the new Republic of Poland boasted a Papal Nuncio who must certainly have been involved in the transfer arrangements. He was none other than Msgr. Achille Ratti, the future Pius XI. Considerable expense was involved in the moving of a large library, furniture and equipment, to say nothing of the purchase of spacious new quarters in the Polish city of Lublin. In war-devastated Poland money was forthcoming almost at once from two Polish millionaires who, strangely enough, were well known to be prominent Freemasons.

Another future Pope who had fleeting contact with Lublin University was young Fr. Montini. Stationed in Poland in 1922, he later told friends in Rome that he had felt much more at home among the radical young intellectuals of Lublin University than he did among the diplomats and aristocrats of the capital.

As for the future John Paul's work at Lublin, his classes continued for over a decade, even into his years as Bishop. Indeed he is known to have delivered several lectures there after his election to the papacy. Already in 1953 his teaching had begun to draw crowds at both Krakow and Lublin in spite of the fact that those years were marked by severe persecution of the Church in Poland. Cardinal Wyszynski was under house arrest, religious teaching was forbidden in the schools, priests were being arrested on trumped up charges and hospitals and other charitable institutions were being removed from Church hands.

Three years later when Gomulka came to power there was a certain thaw. The Cardinal was freed and the Church was given limited leeway. It was the year 1956 and Fr. Wojtyla was consecrated a bishop. Two years later Pius XII

made him Auxiliary at Krakow with right of succession.

A conclave and preparation for a Council were drawing near. Two Wojtyla books were published, the Max Scheler thesis and a book on marriage called *Love and Responsibility*. The prompt appearance of these works in several translations may have promoted the growing interest of Rome in the young Polish Bishop with the result that he was invited to take part in the preparatory work of, we must assume, the Council's "insiders" since the invitation came from Bishop Garrone of Toulouse who would one day become the chief inquisitor of Archbishop Lefebvre.

That brief biographical resumé released by the press section of the Vatican on election night in 1978 referred to the Wojtyla contribution to the Council document *Gaudium et Spes,* as "decisive". Known in English as The "Church in the Modern World", *Gaudium et Spes* turned out to be one long dissertation on how to undermine tradition. Typical as well as startling, the "decisive" contributions of Archbishop Wojtyla, among them, "It is not the Church's role to lecture unbelievers. We are engaged in a search along with our fellow men... let us avoid moralizing or the suggestion that we have a monopoly on truth...", words he would repeat in *Ut Unam Sint* years later.

Politically, his interventions during the Council were notably defensive of the *status quo* in Eastern Europe, particularly when they came to resist the pleas of conservatives to insert a condemnation of Marxism or, failing that, a condemnation of atheism. In their *Letters from Vatican City* the team that called itself "Xavier Rynne" reported, "Archbishop Wojtyla rebuffed the charge of excited Czech Bishop Hnilica in the final debate on *Gaudium et*

*Spes* that to say only what this schema says about atheism is tantamont to saying nothing at all' with the rejoinder that atheism can be taken up by the Council only with great difficulty because the question is so complex."

For "Xavier Rynne" the Wojtyla objection was reasonable and practical because "Russian Orthodox observers were weighing every word carefully since their presence at the Council had been conditioned on an understanding that there would be no outward condemnation."

Pope Paul VI rewarded Msgr. Wojtyla's participation in Vatican II with the rank of Cardinal in 1967, making him at the same time a member of three Curial bodies and advisor to Rosemary Goldie's Council for the Laity. Thus for eleven years before becoming Pope he was taking part in top level conversations and decision-making in four major areas of the changing Church, doing his considerable share in speeding transformation. Hardly "a man from afar".

A singular honor came to him in 1971 in the way of election by the World Episcopal Synod, meeting that year in Rome, to their newly constituted permanent twelve-man central committee. Only three European bishops participate in this elite body which projects for the Pope theological initiatives and developments for the whole Church through its control of the Episcopal conferences throughout the world.

At the 1974 Synod, with its Alinsky-like call for an "evangelization of love", Cardinal Wojtyla acted as official theologian, as he did the following year for the first international conference of European bishops under the notably liberal Archbishop (now Cardinal) Etchegaray of Marseille. His introductory intervention, "Bishops as

Servants of the Faith" breathed Maritain's Integral Humanism. At the next Synod, three years later, in line with other speakers on the theme of "catechesis", he harked back to the Austrian Jesuit, Jungmann, who in 1929 was urging "a rejection of the sterile transmission of theological knowledge,"

Still in his fifties Cardinal Wojtyla was now of the Vatican inner circle. Spring 1977 found him conducting the Lenten retreat for the papal household at the request of Paul VI, as well as winding up a nine-year transformation program in his own diocese of Krakow, a program which he said was meant to bring the laity into full participation.

Then in 1978, on the evening of October 16, Karol Wojtyla, Metropolitan of Krakow, thirty-five years a priest, attained the summit, election to the Chair of Peter.

# IV

# REALITY IN THE NINETIES

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## *Control*

Catholics of a traditionalist stamp are inclined to say that without the intervention of Satan the revolution could not have taken place. Less apocalyptically it could be said that without the intervention of a miracle it was bound to happen. All the cards were stacked that way. There was the structural fact of absolute papal authority with its necessary compliment of unquestioning obedience. There was the unusual correlation of the lives of five men who exercised that authority, and finally, there was the widespread alienation of believing Catholics from the societies in which they lived. Thus, once undermining was decided upon, it turned out to be a less than herculean task.

In view of the hierarchical structure of the Catholic Church, the smooth exercise of authority, as in an army, is essential. For better or for worse, it is the Pope of Rome who rules the Church; thus it is only through the papacy that doctrine or practice can be changed. In spite of the fuss made over them by news-hungry journalists, theologians remain on the sidelines. Following a pattern set by the so-called Modernists at the turn of the century, they debate among themselves in cozy academic reunions year in and year out. If, as happens now and then, one of their musings strikes a responsive chord in the Vatican, the idea may eventually be found filtering down from pope to bishops and on down to parish priests and their flocks. Should the papacy show no interest, the theory will at best make the rounds of theological reviews until it peters out. The "integral humanism" of Jacques Maritain made the grade, the "omega point" of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin failed to do that.

increasing protest, but inside the organization he heads his authority remains intact. His controlling hand is in every Episcopal appointment, in the designation of every member of the Roman Curia, of every cardinal, of the heads of each Secretariat and of each of the major religious orders, of members of the theological commissions as well as in the naming of nuncios or apostolic delegates to the over one hundred diplomatic posts throughout the world. His hand can even be seen in the contestations, in as much as it is a hand that refrains from dressing down.

In terms of impact on the Church as a whole, the papal faculty to choose which priests are to rise to the episcopate is undoubtedly the most decisive. Using the faculty the way recent popes have used it, this power can guarantee support for papal decisions throughout the whole managerial network of the Church.

If has been said that modern bishop-making would do credit to a secret society. The first impulse invariably stems from the interest an incumbent bishop takes in a priest in his diocese. The prelate goes on to spend a period of discreet observation of the subject's attitudes, tendencies and preferences before taking soundings among both his clergy and laity, hoping to verify his initial judgment. In a changing Church it must be assumed that there has been a changing criterion for assessing the suitability of candidates for the episcopate. Administrative ability, formerly a prime consideration, has given way to a priest's enthusiasm for change and his willingness to comply with the decisions of others. A young man of outstanding intellectual gifts, and a tendency to use them, may eventually find his place on a Jesuit review, but his chances of rising to the episcopate are virtually nil.

The Pope begins to take part in the process of selection as soon as the Episcopal dossier is put into the hands of his envoy, the nuncio or apostolic delegate assigned to the country in question. A recognizably elegant figure at diplomatic receptions around the world, the nuncio is a nearly unknown personage to the average Catholic, who would be astonished to learn how profoundly this man's key role in bishop-making can effect his own religious life.

It is the nuncio, on receiving the local bishop's report concerning one or more candidates, who undertakes the second period of investigation, calling upon carefully cultivated sources, always in an atmosphere of secrecy, in order finally to submit a short list of prospective bishops to the Vatican with his own additional recommendations. In the end it is the Pope, on the basis of the material he receives, who will decide who is to be raised to the episcopate.

The weight of the nuncio's role in forming the Pope's governing corps is cited by Clifford Langley, correspondent of London's *Times,* "Bruno Heim, the Vatican envoy, can be credited with effecting within the relatively short period of 1973 to 1985 a profound revolution within the Catholic Church in Great Britain." Readers will remember another profound change the Swiss prelate helped to effect. As private secretary to Nuncio Angelo Roncalli in Paris in 1944 he was partner in recycling the ideology of one hundred French bishops accused by General de Gaulle of having collaborated with the Germans during the Occupation.

In the United States every priest elevated to the episcopate between the years 1933 and 1958 owed his mitre to having passed muster with Msgr. Amleto Cicognani,

the progressive-minded diplomat whom Pius XII had entrusted with the delicate task of "reinterpreting" Pius XI's anti-Marxist encyclical *Divini Redemptoris so* that American Catholics of 1940, still numb from reports of Communist atrocities in the Spanish Civil War, could be persuaded to go to war on the side of the Soviet Union. Twenty years later, Cicognani, now Secretary of State under John XXIII, was asked by an Italian journalist what he thought of the Second Vatican Council, just then underway. Exclaimed the octogenarian Secretary, "Great things are happening!"

Although, thanks to a nearly foolproof system of selection, bishops have become a submissive chorus of approval for every papal initiative, the office was meant to be one of great individual authority. It signified "the fullness of priestly power", a phrase which has been eliminated from the new rite of Episcopal consecration. The Pope himself is a bishop, the Bishop of Rome.

Fullness of power is, if course, the last thing the new Church fosters unless it be fullness of papal power. A bishop stepping out of line, as witness Marcel Lefebvre, can be a serious obstacle in the path of change. Pius XII envisioned this problem in the mid-1930's when, although still only Secretary of State, he began to experiment with the idea of grouping bishops into national assemblies. He worked at first with the Germans. All during the 1940's plans for what came to be called "Episcopal conferences" continued to be carried forward, so that at the present time virtually every country where there are bishops has its Episcopal "club" and in certain extensive geographical areas there are super-conferences such as the Latin American CELAM.

When the top Curia member, Josef Cardinal Ratzinger, gave his surprising interview to an Italian

journalist in August 1984, no part of his stringent commentary on what he called "the crisis in the Church" was stronger than what he had to say about the Episcopal conference system. Pronouncing it "devoid of any theological basis" he went on to say that it" deprives the individual bishop of his proper authority". A student of the undermining phenomenon can only assume that was precisely what it was meant to do.

From ancient times a bishop was responsible only to the Pope and he could count on being able to present his problems and requests directly to the Holy See. Under the conference system his every initiative must be submitted to the consideration of his fellow bishops and its destiny is dependent on their giving it, or not giving it, approval by vote.

"This bureaucratic structure", says Ratzinger, "is essentially a faceless one, as conference members make their way through endless preparatory schemas until they finally reach a flattened out decision. In this way Magisterium becomes paralyzed by making it dependent on a maze of organizers, easy to infiltrate and influence. Assembly Magisterium can be manipulated to insinuate doubt into every problem of the faith."

The Prefect says that in many conferences the all-pervading pressures of "group spirit" make bishops reluctant to disturb the peace and "the resulting mood of conformism induces the majority to move passively in the direction determined by an enterprising minority."

In the late 1940's, on orders from Pius XII, Marcel Lefebvre, then Bishop of Dakar and Apostolic Delegate in Africa, was traveling in pith helmet and cassock from the Congo to Madagascar, from the Cameroons to French West Africa, to set up Episcopal conferences. Years later he would come to realize how much harm this phase of his work

did to francophone Africa. Like Ratzinger, he refers to "assemblyMagisterium" as taking away the real authority of the bishop. "It makes him a prisoner of collegiality. Theoretically a bishop can in a number of cases, act against the vote of the group, but this proves impossible in practice since, as soon as the session ends the majority decisions are published and circulated to priests and faithful. By opposing the decisions, a dissenting bishop invokes the authority of the assembly against himself."

As for the "enterprising minority", referred to by the Cardinal, these are the men elected to chair each of the conferences and who, with one other prelate from the same country, meet in Rome every two years to take part in what is called a World Episcopal Synod. For the space of one month their daily deliberations are followed by hundreds of members of the international press who are apt to remark that they could have told it all without leaving their home bases. After the 1971 meeting *Time* was already complaining, "These Synods reveal only too clearly the high cost of the bishops' lack of power. The world has begun to yawn. To this waiting world the immobility of the hierarchy is inexplicable."

Inexplicable to *Time* perhaps, but not to the student of subversion in the Church. The importance to absolute papal authority of the kind of Episcopal immobility that makes the press yawn can be measured by a curious set of statistics. Attending the First Vatican Council were some 550 bishops, nearly the world total in 1870. While the number of Catholics increased during the next ninety years, particularly in Africa, the increase was nowhere near one hundred percent, yet the number of bishops was increased nearly five hundred percent so that around 2500 prelates were available for the Second Vatican Council. In the quarter of a century since that event the number of

practicing Catholics has halved while the number of bishops, over 4000, has virtually doubled.

In order to keep in line such a large group of men, however carefully selected and however conformist by nature and training, unusual steps were taken in the early 1970's. Lest snowballing changes cause even the most reliable among them to quail, bearers of pectoral cross, ring, mitre and staff were sent back to school. Bishops from every part of the world were pressured to spend a summer month in Rome to undergo intensive courses in theological updating. Nearly one hundred American bishops could be found every year attending classes at the North American College under the guidance of the far-out Biblical critic, Raymond Brown, and the leader of Rome's English-speaking Charismatics, Francis Sullivan, S.J.

Only very occasionally does the smooth exercise of what is referred to as Episcopal collegiality hit a snag. In 1980 in El Salvador Msgr. Riva y Damas, alone among the tumultuous little country's four bishops, attended the funeral of the assassinated Bishop Oscar Romero. For the others, Romero's outspoken commitment to Marxism seemed incompatible with his office. With an election to the presidency of the local Episcopal conference in the offing. Pope John Paul preempted the certain selection of a conservative by appointing Riva y Damas as his Apostolic Delegate, thus giving him precedence over the others.

The previous year the same Pope had intervened in an opposite kind of Episcopal problem. Msgr. Johannes Gijsen of Roermond, youngest of the nine bishops of the Netherlands, had become impatient with the post-Conciliar proliferation of what he considered to be time-wasting lay organizations in his diocese. In addition to the usual dozen or so parish associations prevalent in most countries the Dutch had come up with three or four of their own.

Persuading these last to disband locally, Bishop Gijsen set to work on a more important problem. It had been decided in Episcopal conference that, due to the appalling drop in enrollment, all the seminaries in the country were to be closed, leaving the handful of candidates to the priesthood free to attend secular universities "with the added advantage", it was suggested, "that their outlook would be broadened." Dismayed, Msgr. Gijsen made a dramatic move. He set up a little seminary of his own at Roermond.

Pope John Paul took immediate action. Summoning the nine members of the Dutch hierarchy to Rome, he put them through seventeen days of tightly closed deliberations under the tutelage of Louvain University's most advanced *periti,* sitting through every one of the sessions himself, even intervening several times.

News of the Vatican-ordered Dutch Synod had made for hopeful excitement in conservative circles in many countries, At last the Holy Father was going to do something about those radical Dutch bishops. The Left was worried and as a consequence reporters and religious writers from all over the world flocked to Rome, only to find themselves confronted with an exercise in censorship that was sheer torture. While news bulletins were issued by the Vatican press office at regular intervals, they contained no names at all. Reading that this or that had been said without learning who it was that had said it made the whole operation senseless. Thus it was that worried progressives and hopeful conservatives left Rome with nothing more than they had started out with, namely the supposition that the Pope had called the Dutch hierarchy to the Vatican to reprove them for their radicalism.

Quite the opposite was true. The seventeen days ended with young Bishop Gijsen thoroughly quashed while the other eight bishops of the Netherlands, along with Pope John

Paul, declared in a final document that, happily, they had achieved full *communio.*

Rome had spoken. The matter, along with the Gijsen seminary, was closed.

## *Anathema*

It was in the pleasant mountain town of Brixen, called Bressanone by the Italians who received it along with the rest of South Tyrol as war booty in 1919, that the Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Josef Cardinal Ratzinger, was taking his 1984 summer vacation in the vast, now nearly empty baroque monastery when, in a startling breach of Curial reserve and a head over heels reversal of Holy Office procedure, he granted an interview to Vittorio Messori, a journalist based in Milan. It was no ordinary interview. For six hours a day over a period of three days the amiable Bavarian with the photogenic shock of white hair answered questions, a Grand Inquisitor in reverse.

The Second Vatican Council' had come to a close twenty years before and the Cardinal was ready to admit to his interrogator that in the interim the Church had arrived at a state of crisis. Did he, in his top Vatican position, Messori asked, intend to do anything about it?

Ratzinger smiled, "You know in our so-called ex-Holy Office we are only ten, rather too few to undertake a *coup d'etat.* Even if we wanted to, we could hardly set up a dictatorship."

Not but what he was upset. What emerged from the long sessions in Brixen was a kind of dirge for the passing of the Church-as-Institution. From start to finish the mood was one of mourning. The Cardinal even went so far as to use Paul VI's dramatic designation, "auto-destruction". While Pope Paul had gone on to indicate that some kind of occult force was undermining the Church, Ratzinger was more matter of fact. The blame, he said, lay with those he referred to alternately as "certain theologians", "some intellectuals" and "more than one *peritus"*. He named no names.

The journalist knew perfectly well that Josef Ratzinger at thirty-three, had himself been one of the most prominent of the young theological *periti* of the Second Vatican Council. His task had been to bring the seventy-seven year-old Cardinal Frings of Cologne into line with the new thinking. By relaying the speculations of his teacher, Karl Rahner, a disciple in turn of the Austrian existentialist, Martin Heidegger, the young priest was able to make of the old cardinal a leader of the ultra-progressive company of Council fathers known as the "Rhine Group". In 1964, when the death of Pope John caused an interval of several months between Council sessions, Fr. Ratzinger along with other avant-garde theologians took the time to create the radical review, *Consilium*. Knowing all this, Messori was unable to resist the question, "Eminence, do you look back now on *Consilium* as a sin of your youth?"

"On the contrary", came the affable reply." From the beginning I was insisting that *Consilium* keep within the boundaries of the Council, never moving ahead of it." Indeed when the periodical moved shockingly ahead of it to propose, among other things, that the Pope ride subway trains like everybody else, Fr. Ratzinger moved away to

set up in the company of radical theologians Rahner, Congar and Von Balthasar a slightly more sedate review they called *Communio.*

Touching on the heart of the present crisis, the Cardinal was surprisingly frank, "Catholics have lost their conviction that there is one truth and that truth is definable in a precise way." He expressed regret that this loss of conviction was bound to reflect tellingly on the spreading of the Gospel of Christ. At one point in the conversation he even envisioned the collapse of the Church's entire missionary effort. "Some theologians are laying emphasis on the value of non-Catholic religions, not as an extraordinary but as an ordinary path to salvation, so that our missionaries say, 'Why should we disturb non-Christians by persuading them to accept baptism and a faith in Christ, seeing that their own religion constitutes the proper road to salvation within their culture and in their part of the world?'"

Some theologians? Men as daring as the younger Josef Ratzinger who wrote, "For modern consciences the certainty that God's mercy transcends the lawfully constituted Church renders more questionable a Church that for a millennium and a half not only tolerated its own claim to be the unique way to salvation but elevated that idea to an essential element of its self-understanding, a part of its very faith"?

However questionable Ratzinger may have thought the claim to be, it can be asked whether a faith with a lesser claim could have spread from Palestine to Rome and then all over the western world. How indeed could Islam have swept across North Africa, Spain and the Middle East without the unique salvation claim of the Koran with its ominous lines, "those who insist that Allah is one of three will try to get out of Hell but their punishment will be lasting"? Had the Jews lost their conviction that they were God's "chosen people", would

Judaism have lasted to this day?

In view of the present chaos, Messori wonders what went wrong. Was the beginning of the 1960's the proper time to have called a Council?

"Oh, it was! Just at that time there was a great longing." Longing? No doubt there was eagerness on the part of the young intellectual priests who frequented the offices of Miss Goldie at Piazza San Calisto to try out their newly-learned theological expertise. However it is safe to say that the last thing on earth the ordinary clergy, the male and female religious and the men and women in the parishes were longing for was an elite-induced redefinition that would upset all the learned tenets of their faith. One can even surmise that had many of them known what was going on at Miss Goldie's offices they would have marched on the place in protest.

Longing, for the average Catholic in the 1960's, focused on security, on the steady support and protection the solid old institution with all its beloved trimmings was able to give them in the difficult task of believing. At that time converts were still flocking in and one of them, the British novelist, Muriel Spark, asked by reporters why she had abandoned Judaism for Catholicism, replied briskly, "For the certainty! One must have certainty."

At that time few of the faithful had heard of the experimental liturgies that were going on in several European centers, however already they had begun to have misgivings. There was the never-explained loosening of the laws of fast and abstinence, changes in the liturgy, ~~*albeit*~~ minor ones, along with the fact their children seemed no longer to need their help in memorizing answers to questions in the Catechism. Indeed, the Catechism had disappeared and with its disappearance children had become quite vague as to what their religion was all about.

It had been Pope John who admitted Fr. Ratzinger to the inner circle of the Second Vatican Council, Pope Paul who appointed him to the exclusive and openly radical Pontifical Theological Commission and Pope John Paul II who made him a cardinal and brought him into the Curia. There can be no doubt but what he is a pope's man, dedicated to the papal revolution. How then could this interview, circulated in book form in half a dozen translations, have taken place?

From this vantage point in time the answer seems obvious. Twenty years after the Council a general malaise had indeed reached crisis proportions. It was natural that the Pope and his top advisors would feel an urgency to clear the air. In doing so they fell back on a ploy long considered effective by seasoned politicians, that of provoking the opposition to declare itself. Accordingly, the provocative gesture was to be made and made from the top. No less a personage than the Prefect for the Doctrine of the Faith would give voice to the protest of the faithful, even if it meant breaking millennia of curial reserve. After all, Vatican Archives had been opened in defense of Pius XII. What was one more daring precedent? Complaints must come out to be examined critically, treated with dignity and lamented. As the inevitable question of blame arose, it must be treated with the utmost caution. No names could be mentioned, least of all the name of a pope. Guilt must be admitted, but it must be assigned to anonymous, forgotten or deceased theologians.

*The Ratzinger Report,* as the Messori work was finally entitled, aroused as much fear among progressives as hope among conservatives and excitement was running high when Pope John Paul summoned to Rome what he called an Extraordinary Synod toward the end of 1985.

The excitement was fair measure of the ignorance prevalent among Catholics and non-Catholics alike as to what the real power lines in the Church consist of. It ought not to have needed a month of bland Synod sessions to show that the bishops who came to Rome were not only the carefully chosen, carefully trained, "yes men" of the papacy but the very cream of those men. Prefect Ratzinger had called them "the enterprising minority", those who manage to get elected to the presidency of each of the two hundred or so Episcopal conferences in the world. The result was a month long huzza for Vatican II. The Irish Primate, O'Fiaich, called the Second Vatican Council "by grace of God the most important event of the century", while Jugoslavian Cardinal Kouaric proclaimed unabashedly that it was "a good tree bearing good fruit". With unanimous affirmation of the represented episcopate of the entire world the matter of dissent was brought to a close. It had been aired, given a fair hearing, put in its place and filed away. No more need be said.

If, in all fairness to Cardinal Ratzinger, one wanted to assume that his conception of interfaith relations really underwent a change in recent years, one would only wonder what he thought of Pope John Paul's "Day of Peace" at Assisi. The morning of October 27, 1986 came on cold with blustery, half snowy showers. Except for the occasional housewife on her way to market and three busloads of high school students brought in for the event from towns near the little hillside city of St. Francis, streets were deserted. The Vatican press office in Rome, expecting a crush of journalists as if for a Reagan-Gorbachev summit, gave out passes to the various events on a pool basis. The relatively few reporters who showed up, however, preferred to keep warm inside the Cittadella, that complex of buildings, lecture halls and publishing plant begun by Pius XII in

1939 as a kind of general headquarters for change. Studies such as Annibale Bugnini's invention of the New Mass had gone on here in preparation for the Assisi Liturgical Conference of 1956. Newsmen attending the 1986 Day of Peace were treated to displays of the Cittadella's latest editorial efforts, book after book, written by "liberation theologists", from Leonardo Boff to Gustavo Gutierrez.

The scarcity of journalists may have dismayed the organizers of the Day of Peace but not the lack of onlookers. The laity had not been invited. Planned as a television spectacular rather than as a public event, the production did credit to the professionalism of the one-time man of the theater who had prepared for his Day with a strenuous series of dress rehearsals. There had been his warm homage to the memory of Martin Luther in Germany; in Morocco an apology to Islam for the Catholic *Reconquista* of Spain; in Rome the Pope had read aloud the *Psalms* of David to the Chief Rabbi in the Great Synagogue, going on to participate in the Rites of the Great Forest in Tongo and to submit the papal forehead to ritual markings by a Hindu priestess in India.

As a theatrical production, Assisi can be said to have been a resounding success. At the flick of a TV dial one would have thought he had come in on the last act of Verdi's *Aida*, with the great dark arches of the Basilica of St. Francis making a striking background for the pure white vestments of the star, the man called "Holy Father" and "Vicar of Christ-on-Earth" at the head of a circle of gorgeously costumed supernumeraries, ranging from Buddhists whose belief in God is optional, to Muslims and Jews whose God has no son, to Shintoists whose God is a head of state, to Animists whose gods are snakes.

Even the ever-cool *New York Times* was taken aback

when the "God-King", the Dalai Lama, converted the altar of Assisi's Church of St. Peter to his cult by placing a statue of the Buddha atop the tabernacle and setting incense burners and scrolls around it. Protestant Fundamentalist, Carl McIntyre called the Pope's Day of Peace "the greatest abomination in Church history". For Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre it was "the culminating insult to Our Lord."

Such expressions of outrage are understandable only if one is able to recall the profound sense of the sacred that prevailed in Catholic houses of worship before the undermining of the Church. In the old days every church and chapel had as its core, a holy of holies, the tabernacle, a box, silk lined, sometimes gold-plated, which was placed in the center of the main altar. There under lock and key in beautifully fashioned, often jewel-studded chalices, consecrated hosts remaining after Mass were stored. It must be remembered that for believing Catholics the hosts are nothing less than the body and blood of Jesus Christ. The Real Presence in the tabernacle of an altar was signaled by a sanctuary lamp hanging nearby which gave off a small red glow. It was this Presence that caused men and women to genuflect before entering a pew that decreed kneelers between the benches. It was because of the Presence that communicants fasted from midnight before the Mass wherein they received the sacred host. Catholics who were children during the 1940's and' 50's can remember making sure to brush their teeth before midnight lest they inadvertantly swallow water in the process. Then in 1953 Pius XII decided that a three hour fast before communion would do. Four years later it occurred to him that a one hour fast was enough. However, he was to be outdone by his old assistant who became Paul VI, decreeing a ridiculous fifteen minutes.

It was the Real Presence in the tabernacle that accounted for the silence and the appearance in a darkened church at any hour of the day of occasional kneeling figures at prayer. Those people were "making a visit", coming in off the street for a few minutes of meditation in the presence of God. For all of them it brought calm, for some the taste, however slight, of what the mystics know. "Visits to the Blessed Sacrament" were private devotions and in the new collective Church immersed in *communio,* private devotion is discouraged. Already in 1943, in his encyclical *Mystici Corporis,* Pius XII dealt negatively with the question of private devotions, while for advanced theologians the sight of a person praying alone became actually repugnant. Fr. Ratzinger was one of them.

In his. work *Die Sacramentale Begründung Christliche Existent* he explains, "Eucharistic devotion such as is noted in the silent visit by the devout in church must not be thought of as a conversation with God. This would assume that God was present there locally and in a confined way. To justify such an assertion shows a lack of understanding of the Christological mysteries of the very concept of God. This is repugnant to the serious thinking of the man who knows about the omnipresence of God. To go to church on the ground that one can visit God who is present there is a senseless act which modern man rightfully rejects."

Here Ratzinger strikes resoundingly at the very essence of the Catholic Church, at its Holy of Holies, at that Presence in the tabernacle that set it apart all through the ages, not only from all non-Christian religions, but also from the seven thousand or so sects that have retained the name of Christian.

*Die Sacramentale Begründung* is available on bookstands in Germany today. Its theses have never been either rejected or censored. However, although so long neglected

as to be virtually forgotten, neither have the Decrees of the Council of Trent been abrogated and Canon Four, written in the mid-sixteenth century to refute attacks on the Real Presence by Martin Luther and Jean Calvin, reads as follows: "If anyone says that, after the consecration is complete, the body and the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ are not in the sacrament of the Eucharist... and in the consecrated hosts or particles which are reserved (in the tabernacle) the true body and blood of our Lord remain not, let him be anathema."

*Anathema*, a Greek word referring simply to "that which is set apart." Anathema directed at the Holy Office brings the Vatican revolution full circle.

## *Diaspora*

Like most of the Jews, all of the Catholics in the world live in a condition of *diaspora*. While Jews can, if they are so inclined, take up residence in Israel, Catholics have no homeland. No one among the hundreds of countries in which they live can be called "Catholic".

A century ago England's Cardinal Manning explained what that meant, "For three hundred years the faithful have been in contact with the corrupt civilization of the old, so-called Catholic countries and with the anti-Catholic civilization

of countries in open schism. The intellectual tendencies of the former have been departing steadily from the unity of the faith and of the Church. With truth wasting away, the Catholic instinct has become feeble and the minds of Catholics have been much affected by the atmosphere in which they live."

Cardinal Manning dates the beginning of the malaise from the breakup of medieval Christendom when in the words of Milan Kundera, "God slowly departed from the seat where he had controlled the universe and its order of values, told good from evil and given sense to each thing." In *Quas Primas* Pius XI noted how several centuries of denying the Church the right to make laws had led to "the reduction of Catholicism to the level of false religions" and he cited the subsequent domination of the secular states wherein "religion has come to be tolerated more or less at the whim of the rulers."

It was with the French Revolution of two hundred years ago that Catholicism, even in democratic countries, became a subject of mere toleration. With the exception of the Papal States in central Italy and the great sprawl of the Hapsburg Empire in the middle of Europe, most of the countries where Catholics lived were filled with tension during the whole of the nineteenth century. Nowhere was friction greater than in the two countries dealt with at length earlier in this study, France and Mexico. Fast changing governments boasting of dedication to "liberty, equality and fraternity" made it a question of touch and go whether convents, monasteries, seminaries and even churches would remain open or be converted into post offices or barracks. In both countries the Revolution's principle of separation of Church and State deprived nearly the entire populations of both countries of any kind of leverage as Catholics.

Achille Ratti as Pius XI was the last to speak out against separation. His *Quas Primas* echoed that even stronger admonition of Pius X: "It is an absolutely false thesis and an extremely dangerous one to think that Church and State should be separated. Such a thesis is an obvious negation of the supernatural order."

In recent times authoritarianism on the Left has been no less eager to reject the separation principle than orthodoxy on the Right. Following the visit of Archbishop Casaroli to Czechoslovakia in 1975 *Pravda* of Bratislava editorialized, "A Socialist State cannot content itself with simply granting freedom of worship to those who profess a religious faith, nor simply give freedom of expression to those who are atheists. It has the duty of forming the consciousness of the people in order to bring them into harmony with Socialism so that they are able to perceive the world and themselves in the world as full, active participants in the great historical undertaking which is the formation of the Communist Society."

Behind the early twentieth century struggles of both *l'Action Française* and the *Cristeros* had been the attempt to restore to the faithful the protection of a Catholic State. Why, their leaders reasoned, in overwhelmingly Catholic countries, should not the State be Catholic? Obviously because the one thing the revolution cannot abide is a Catholic State. The fact that the wielders of power within the Vatican at the time of the French and Mexican crises showed they could not abide one is indicative of where Secretaries Gasparri and Pacelli stood. By championing the side first, of Premier Poincaré and then of President Calles, they left no doubt about where their interests lay.

Both the French and the Mexican movements had grown out of decades of frustration engendered by so-called anti-clerical, in reality anti-Christian governments. Without that

long, exasperating trial it is doubtful that either Frenchmen or Mexicans would have found the strength to defend the faith when leadership appeared. On the other hand, had not Rome vigorously suppressed both movements it is possible that France and probable that Mexico would have eventually recovered their Catholic identity.

By the 1920's believers in both nations had come to look on anti-clericalism as a familiar enemy. They had learned to handle it so that, by the middle of the decade in France, hope of success had risen sharply and by the end of the decade in Mexico, victory was in sight. Then, with no warning at all in both countries the scenario was suddenly turned upside down. All at once it was not the old Masonic governments opposing them but Rome, the Vatican, the Holy Father himself, reaching out to put them down. Ready to die for Rome, for the Holy Father (and thousands of Mexicans had already died) all they got for their pains was a resounding pontifical slap in the face.

It had been Pius XI's *Quas Primas* with its command to initiate a feast day in honor of "Christ the King", that had given the Mexican rebels their battle cry, "Viva Cristo Rey!" That encyclical had told them that it was "the timidity of good people reluctant to engage in conflict" that made the enemies of the Church even bolder and it bade the faithful to "fight courageously under the banner of Christ the King". Mexican university students devoured every word of the papal message in order to pass it on to the peasants in the battle field and by the end of 1928 several score of the country's most promising young men had faced government firing squads, while many more would die from snipers' bullets once the Vatican order to lay down arms had been obeyed. With that order something snapped in the minds of the most faithful of the faithful. As Bishop Gonzalez Valencia explained in Rome to the new

secretary of State, Eugenio Pacelli: "Gone, forever, the traditional esteem the Mexican has always had for his bishop. I see and I .tell you in great sorrow that the shock of this scandal, with its obvious complicity on the part of the Vatican, touches on the Holy See itself and it is so grave that one can foresee a great loss of faith."

Meanwhile, shock over the Vatican-induced scandal in France had driven at least one champion of the Catholic State into the opposite camp. Philosophy professor Jacques Maritain, returning to Paris from Rome, set to work developing his "integral humanism" which would advocate an emasculated Church "asking no more than to bear witness by putting itself at the service of mankind in the New Society that is being born."

Now six decades later, the New Society is upon us and the witnessing Church, asking nothing, has received nothing except the continued aggression of strongly politicized secular States. While the Perfect Society let itself be dissolved into the Church-as-Servant, the atmosphere in which Catholics live reached a degree of alienation in the West and repression in the East undreamed of by Cardinal Manning. Meanwhile among the clerical-sponsored guerrilla bands in Latin America the Church-as-Servant became the Church-as-Underdog. On the day Nicaragua's Daniel Ortega was received in private audience by John Paul II, Vatican Radio was blaring out the Sandinista's favorite "hymn", something about "the Jesus who sweats in the streets and picks up his pay like the rest of us."

The devout old-fashioned Catholics who insist that the breakdown could not have occurred without the intervention of the Devil, take heart in the promise of Christ that He will be with them "until the end of time". While there

is little doubt but what the old Faith will somehow survive, whether it will return as a recognized body through centuries of growth of the now diminutive traditionalist movement or through a surprising flash of inspiration, a *la Gorbachev,* from within the Vatican, is impossible to predict. Should however, some future pope awaken to the fact that the Church is facing extinction and should he want to do something about it, he would do well to study the ways of those veterans of survival, the leaders of the Jewish people.

Bringing a faith through six millennia against fearful odds was not accomplished through surrender, compromise, casting shame on past history, diminishing sacred rites and asking "only to bear witness". Even as the Jews never relinquished their claim to being God's "chosen people", so Catholics bent on survival would have to recover their identity as the Church Militant. Those two words in themselves could encourage members to stand tall, even though the phrase never referred to military might but rather to the struggle the faithful on earth are engaged in, as they make the challenging choice between good and evil on their path to salvation.

Abhorrant as they are to followers of the Montini-Alinsky Church Loving, the designation "militant" and its sequence "triumphant", referring to those who have managed to make it to Heaven, would have to be reinstated if only in the interest of realism. Jewish advisors could hardly object; does not the very name "Israel" translate as "God fighteth"? Jews are not ashamed to fight for what they take to be sacred, their homeland with its supportive laws, their age-old Holy Scripture, their sacred liturgy and tabernacles for their holy of holies. Catholics, on the other hand, having lost Christendom which was their homeland, have gone on in this century to let themselves be divested

of their sacred liturgy, sacred language, sacred dogmatic teaching and in hundreds of thousands of churches, even of their tabernacles, their holy of holies.

Zionist leaders over half a century ago, expecting that their forthcoming nation would attract settlers who spoke a dozen different languages decided with wonderful wisdom that the common and official language should be Hebrew. It was a daring decision. Here was a tongue that had gone out of use centuries before Christ was born. He spoke Aramaic. Hebrew had survived only in the writings of rabbinical scholars. Considering the fact that it was a language altogether unrelated to the Yiddish, Spanish, German, French, English, Polish, Russian or Hungarian the immigrants would be speaking on arrival and the fact that the script would appear to most of them as exotic as Chinese pictographs, the successful installation of Hebrew as the official language of Israel was one of the most surprising achievements of the entire Zionist movement.

How much easier it would have been had they chosen Esperanto, the international language invented by a Jewish scholar and based on Latin, so long the language of all Europe and found today in most of the words of the French, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese languages, in half of the English language and much of German. Zionist pioneers, however, rejected the simple solution in favor of the sacred.

Both easy and sacred for Christians, Latin is a treasure the papal revolution threw away. Granted that to insist on the use of a common language and to supervise its dissemination, there has to be an interested State. Jews claiming their right to have their own State have been able to do it. Catholics, surrendering that right, had no way to, however that fact is no excuse for the centuries of neglect of Latin by the Church.

If the Vatican had seen to it that every Catholic child learned at least to pronounce the easily pronounceable Latin words of the Mass, Benediction, Baptism and three or four common prayers, it would have given each one throughout his life personal riches that would have stood him in good stead when the revolution came on.

As it was, when the blow fell and the New Mass was imposed in the mid-1960's, the faithful were only vaguely aware of what was being taken from them. Indeed, a calculated provocation on the part of Rome gave many of them a feeling of relief when Latin disappeared. It was during the Council that congregations received an unexpected order to make use of the long discarded Dialogue Mass, the *Missa Recitata,* all of it still in Latin. The consequent bewilderment of millions of the laity can only be imagined. After that happily brief trauma, the New Mass said in the vernacular was greeted as a kind of liberation.

For the Church, Latin meant stability. Being what is called a dead language, it did not change through daily use; thus the liturgy could be trusted to remain at all times and in all places the same. Latin meant solidarity. A Scotsman attending Mass in Bolivia or a Bolivian in Scotland could feel at home in any church of the strange land. Perhaps of most importance was the sacredness of its sound. The Zionists knew well that a liturgy ought to sound holy.

They also know how important to a faith are its martyrs. Not only do Jews honor their dead of the concentration camps, they insist that the rest of the world honor them, too. Global headquarters for this insistence is the Center for Holocaust Studies of the Anti-Defamation League in New York. Producing a continuous volume of persuasive literature, the Center offers a catalogue of material described as "suitable for use in churches, schools, civic groups and libraries" with a preface written by the Nobel Prize

winner, Eli Wiesel. There is a *Guide to Unpublished Holocaust Material* running to three volumes of four hundred pages each, twenty-six audio-visual productions in color, cleared for television, along with a series of hour-long lecture tapes by leading Jewish intellectuals. There are scores of books with such titles as *Genocide and Anne Franck, The Anatomy of Nazism, Ghetto in Flames, Crystal Night* and *Death Train.*

In devastating contrast to the homage to martyrdom carried out by the Jewish Anti-Defamation League, communication experts within the Vatican merit the title "Auto-Defamation League". Even as young Mexican students were facing death by firing squad in the classic way of Roman youth facing lions rather than abjure Christianity, the Vatican was going to extraordinary pains to hide that story from the world. Small wonder, a few years ago, that a professor of a university in Texas when asked how she looked on the Cristero Movement, confessed that she had never heard of it. She was a Catholic and a contributor to conservative religious publications, yet she had never heard of a full scale civil war raging on the border of her own state, if not in her lifetime, then in the lifetime of her mother and father. That she had heard that Hitler killed six million Jews must be taken for granted.

In *Distant Neighbors,* 563 pages of otherwise comprehensive analysis of Mexico, past and present, Alan Riding allows himself just thirty-seven words to depict the Catholic uprising: "Fanaticized peasants led by conservative priests who launched a guerrilla war to the cry of 'Viva Cristo Rey!' which gained them the name *'Cristeros'* and in the name of Christ they carried out murder, arson and sabotage."

This nasty bit may well be all that Riding, the Anglo-Brazilian *New York Times* reporter, was able to find out about

the Mexican "holocaust" during his many years in Mexico. Incredible as it may seem, the Vatican has declared the *Cristero* war to be top secret. It goes further. Even the memory of the struggle must be erased from history. Jean Meyer, a young professor from the University of Perpignan in southern France, visiting Mexico one summer in the 1970's and coming up against this astounding fact, went on to spend six more summers researching the struggle to come up with a three-volume work which he calls *La Christiade.*

Total censorship prevailed even at the time of the fighting. Francis McCullough, a British journalist, found eager acceptance for his on-the-spot news stories on the part of New York editors, only to have publishers give the order, "Don't touch it!"

"Why?" McCullough asked in 1929. "Why was there always such excitement about Jewish pogroms in Tsarist Russia and why is there no mention made of a Christian pogrom in Mexico where, since August 1926. 4047 people have been executed, among them sixteen women?"

From Jean Meyer's preface to *La Christiade;* "Since 1929 Rome has forbidden all writing, talking, even thinking about the *Cristeros,* prohibiting Catholic seminaries, colleges and schools to take up the subject. Worse still, after 1968 when the Church was seized with complexes of self-persecution, should a teacher or preacher be forced to mention the *Cristeros,* he must refer to them as fanatics or revolutionaries."

Assuming the duties of Secretary of State shortly after the so-called "arrangements" were signed, Cardinal Pacelli ordered all Mexican bishops to forbid

access to files and archives dealing with the *Cristero* period under the gravest sanctions. In obedience, ecclesiastical authorities in Guadalajara burnt all the papers relevant to the uprising in that diocese, those in Mexico City, all records of the Joan of Arc Brigades and of the student organizations. Fortunately, says Meyer, the weighty documentation collected by the bishop most sympathetic to the movement, Gonzalez Valencia, is (or at this time of writing, was) safe in the Cathedral of Durango under the proverbial seven locks and keys.

As inexplicable to Meyer as the Church's ban was what turned out to be similar censorship imposed by the Mexican State. Even in the 1970's he found the government as reluctant as the Vatican to divulge information concerning its repression of the rebellion. That such perfect accord should exist between two bodies well known to be antipathetic, spurred him on to try to find the truth about what he took to be a closet full of skeletons.

Returning to Mexico year after year, Prof. Meyer eventually made contact with owners of private collections of documents, writings and memorabilia, as well as valuable material in several Jesuit libraries. In Washington he was able to see military intelligence papers which had run their fifty years of closure to the public. Yale and Amhurst were helpful; however the most fascinating experience in all the absorbing years of work was the tracking down of the old and scattered veterans of the war and listening to enough of their stories to fill over one hundred hours of registration.

For Jean Meyer, the Vatican's command of secrecy is strange beyond belief and altogether unnatural. With Latin Americans expected to make up half of the Catholics in the world by the end of this century, for them not to know of these warriors and martyrs of their own flesh and blood is an enormous deprivation. Meyer offers a weak explanation by suggesting that the Vatican may feel acute embarassment for having deliberately delivered devout and

courageous Catholics into the hands of an openly hostile government.

That the "arrangements" were pleasing to that government goes without saying. The President at the time, Emilio Portes Gil, celebrated the Vatican-contrived surrender in a speech to fellow Lodge members gathered for the annual banquet to mark the summer solstice: "Dear Brothers, we can now confirm the fact that the clergy has come to a full recognition of the law. In Mexico for many years now the State and Freemasonry have been the same thing, entities marching step in step. The struggle is not new. It began twenty centuries ago and it will go on until the end of time."

## *New Catholic, Old Catholic*

Revolution in the Catholic Church, like revolution in Tsarist Russia, in Weimar Germany and even in Somosa's

Nicaragua, first sparked in the minds of a few bright men sitting at desks, pen in hand. These men were the dreamers, schemers, planners of what they were sure was a better way to do things. Their projects would have remained inside their bright minds and on paper except for the fact that absolute power was either at hand or would become so shortly.

In the case of the Church, absolute power was present, however, since it was psychological and spiritual rather than political or military power, it would need half a century to become effective in the lives of hundreds of millions of believers. The new way to be Catholic would come into being only after the faithful had been dispossessed of beliefs, traditions and practices ingrained over a stretch of two millennia. That an undermining process covering a mere five or six decades could have accomplished such a task is one of the most astounding facts of our astounding century.

Could the process have been prevented? Given the circumstances already referred to as "stacked cards" in favor of change, the question can nearly be discounted. To hinder, even postpone, the transformation would have taken remarkable awareness on the part of Catholics everywhere of the sacredness of what they had been given. Had that been present, had not, as Cardinal Manning testified, "the Catholic instinct become feeble", then clear teaching and warm devotion could have fostered the kind of alertness Rafael Merry del Val had urged, alertness brusquely discouraged by the Vatican. As it was, however, hardly any layman, priest or even bishop realized there was anything to be alert about. Only in 1963, when the Second Vatican Council came into the full glare of the international media, was the world permitted to find out what had been going on for so long behind the scenes. By that time it was too late.

And it was only after Episcopal signatures had been put to Council documents by a docile world hierarchy that consequences, inevitable and jolting, began to occur one after the other. The point is, they were consequences, results, not causes. Whatever happened since Vatican II can be traced to things set in motion years, even decades, before. Pope John Paul's astonishing Day of Peace at Assisi harked back to Cardinal Mercier's Malines Conversations. Latin America's gullible opening to "liberation theology" could hardly have occurred had Mexico's *Cristeros* been allowed to claim their hard-won victory, while permission to hold a five thousand-strong rock and marihuana fiesta in the Cathedral where kings of France had been crowned, followed logically the Ratzinger premise that the idea of God present in the confined space of a tabernacle was nonsense. Each of these phenomena was a consequence, not a cause.

Since such consequences meet with little if any resistance, they are bound to continue. Against the progressing downtrend, resisters are few. They might have been many. There was a time, in retrospect a seemingly magic moment, when a sudden consciousness seemed to come over the faithful in widely scattered parts of the world that they themselves, the men and women in the pew — as in the case of the *Cristeros* very few priests were involved — that they themselves could undertake a counter-revolution. It began shortly after the imposition of the Bugnini Mass. Stunned, a considerable number of Catholics began to strike out. There were protests, articles, books, open-letters and there were three international pilgrimages to the Piazza of St. Peter's in Rome. The early 1970's saw a brief period of excitement, of questioning and of anticipation. However, it was not until late in 1974 that one of the few bishops who had stood up for orthodoxy in the Council, Marcel Lefebvre, emerged to give the spreading insurgence some kind of cohesion.

A native of the far northeastern corner of France and thirty years a missionary in Black Africa, Archbishop Lefebvre, unable to obtain entry into any diocese of his fellow French bishops with his project to found a seminary devoted to traditional teaching, had by 1970 been granted acceptance in French Switzerland. Msgr. Nestor Adam, Bishop of Sion, gave approval for classes to take place in an old country lodge called Ecône, up to then a retirement home for keepers of the nearby St. Bernard Pass.

Eventually the Vatican became curious and in 1974 Pope Paul sent visitors to Ecône, two top theologians of the ever-advanced University of Louvain, to report back to Rome. It was this tour of inspection which triggered the reluctant move of Msgr. Lefebvre into a leadership position. As the two Belgians entered lecture halls the seminary they proceeded to try to undo concepts that had been accepted dogma throughout the Christian ages. Confiding to the youths that a married Catholic priesthood was a future inevitability, they declared that the physical resurrection of Christ was not a certainty and that truth is not "something you can put away in a drawer at night and expect to find the same when you open the drawer in the morning".

The students were amazed and the Archbishop outraged. Forthwith he addressed what he called a "declaration of faith" in the form of an open-letter to the Vatican. It began, "We adhere wholeheartedly and with all our soul to Catholic Rome, Mistress of Wisdom and of Truth. On the other hand we refuse and we have always refused to follow the Rome of neo-Modernist and neo-Protestant tendencies which clearly manifested themselves in the Second Vatican Council and after the Council in all the reforms which issued from it." The declaration was soon

circulating wherever there were Catholics. Counter-revolution was underway.

The visitors, really Inspectors, sent by the Vatican to Ecône, were theologians from the University of Louvain. The name of that Belgian school appears so often in this study and in connection with such crucial events as to give the impression that it has become the theological Vatican, leaving Rome to carry on Church administration.

In his comprehensive study of the Order to which he once belonged, Malachi Martin asserts that the Company of Jesus and the Vatican are, or at least were, in 1987 when his book came out, in a state of war. I suggest that it is a phony war, deliberately set up to allow the Jesuits to plunge ahead with the revolution, while the Vatican assures the faithful that everything is under control. A division of labor but hardly a war.

Consider the fact that Vatican Radio, worldwide apologist for every act of the papacy, is a Jesuit organization, as are the three Pontifical Institutes in Rome, the Gregorian, the Oriental and the Biblicum: Down in membership from an all-time high of 36,000 members at the end of the Council to an estimated 19,000 now, the Company still runs hundreds of schools and there are Jesuit "reflection centers" in Paris, Madrid, Milan, all over Latin America, in Washington, New Delhi, Chicago, St. Louis and Manila, while Jesuit theologians act as planners and advisors for every major grouping such as international synods and Episcopal conferences.

In 1975, when the 32nd Jesuit Congregation or world assembly met in Rome, we *Vaticanisti* were offered two press conferences a day during a whole month. There it

was that we heard Father General Arrupe, like Ignatius Loyola a Basque, take the words of the Founder, "fight under the banner of the Cross to save each and every man" and change it to, "fight under the banner of the Cross to make a more human and divine world" because, he insisted, "it is the world that will become the kingdom of God!" One wonders what it is that gives earthbound utopianists like Fr. Arrupe (now deceased) confidence that they will be around to enjoy such a kingdom.

Malachi Martin points to the beginning of subversion in the Company at the turn of the century, when a small group of young priests formed themselves around the Anglo-Irish convert, George Tyrell, S.J. in a more or less clandestine way. The following generation of dissidents, thrilling to the inventions of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, S.J., came into the open, *albeit* cautiously, while their successors acclaimed freely the existentialism of Karl Rahner, S.J., whom Martin calls "a lacerator of the Faith at its very roots" Paul VI appointed Fr. Rahner to the Pontifical Theological Commission.

Louvain was the birthplace of the aberration known as "liberation theology". It was from there that Roger Weckemann and several fellow Jesuits set off for Chile, where they can be credited with bringing Marxist Salvador Allende to power and his peaceful country to chaos. Rejecting Louvain-induced Leftism, Guatemalans turned to Protestantism, Nicaragua to civil war.

Writing in the Italian review *30 Giorni,* Michel Algrin of the University of Paris uncovered the Louvain office, CIDSE, which urges Sunday Mass collections in France and Germany "for the poor of the Third World". With funds amounting to more than the annual budget of UNESCO, CIDSE sends the francs to support subversion in the

former French colonies in Africa, the marks to Latin America, mainly to Mexico where the "red" Bishop Samuel Ruiz in the far-south state of Chiapas, provides the guerrillas (calling themselves "Zapatistas") with expensive weaponry. Unwilling to join the terrorists, some 50,000 Indians and peasant farmers have been forced from their private or collective farms, sheltered and fed by the Army and the Red Cross, they left their crops to rot and their cattle to run wild.

The government has allowed the situation to continue for four years, apparently intimidated by the news that nearly every city in Europe has its little cluster of pro-Zapatista "non-governmental organizations". The Socialist International lives on!

A few days after those Louvain visitors of Holy Year 1975 handed in their report on Ecône, Paul VI ordered Archbishop Lefebvre to Rome to face three Cardinal Inquisitors, Garrone, Tabera and Wright.

From that moment the international media followed the story step by step. Ecône prospered and the awakened faithful rented one gigantic sports stadium after another to cheer the "rebel bishop" in gratitude, as he said Mass for them in the old way. Geneva was followed by Besangon, Lille, Friedrichshafen, the crowds mounting each time while international television was carrying the Lefebvre message around the world.

Then, at the end of summer 1976, instead of topping Friedrichshafen with a still greater assembly, Lefebvre changed course and accepted the invitation of Cardinal Benelli as Secretary of State, to go to Castel Gandolfo to be received in private audience by Paul VI. Only Benelli was present during the long talk and no media coverage was permitted. As a result, imaginary accounts of the audience, even faked photographs, appeared in the press. Whatever was said, confrontation ceased. There were no more

"rally Masses", the Pope scolded no more, the media lost interest and Lefebvre followers became sorely confused.

The Archbishop continued to train seminarians and to ordain them to the priesthood, although forbidden to do so by the Vatican. Like the recalcitrant Abbé de Nantes and Coache, he was suspended *a divinis*. Nevertheless, within the next decade his Priestly Society of St. Pius was able to boast priories, convents, seminaries and chapels in twenty countries and a body of over two hundred newly ordained priests. During those years the ageing Lefebvre traveled to the five continents and Australia, watching over his many houses and conferring the Sacrament of Confirmation on thousands of young people. Finally in 1988 at the age of 82 he took the major step of consecrating four bishops so that the ordaining of priests in the old Faith could continue after his death.

Thus within clerical bounds, the "Lefebvre movement" can be said to have achieved its purpose. As for the lay followers, the men and women who had come to be called "traditionalists", Lefebvre's hesitation at the precise moment when it looked as though their ranks could swell to encompass a fourth or even a third of the then eight hundred million Catholics, was to leave them bewildered. After Friedrichshafen there was some falling off and there has been relatively little growth since. Nonetheless, in many countries, the rebels set to work with energy and devotion to organize Mass centers in hotel ballrooms, deserted barns, abandoned Protestant churches. In Paris they occupied and continue to hold St. Nicolas-du-Chardonnet, a major church on the Left Bank. Today in France there are around a thousand altars where the traditional Mass is offered and perhaps half that many in the United States

where, at great sacrifice, little schools have been set up as well. A traveler today can find the old Mass in Tokyo, all over Latin America, among the Pacific Islands of New Caledonia and among the Zulus of South Africa. Not all the priests are Lefebvre priests and because the Archbishop limited his authority to his own Society, there is dissention, not over doctrine or practice, but over nearly everything else. Without the leadership he could have given it, the counter-revolution is fragmented.

Why did Marcel Lefebvre wait until nearly ten years after the Council to take a public position? Why did he retreat from that position at the height of demand for what the position signified? Probably for the same reasons that drove Eugenio Pacelli and Giovanni Battista Montini to dedicate their lives to changing the Church, namely, the pressures of family background, early training and subsequent powerful persuasion by associates. An early collaborator of the Archbishop named Jean Madiran as the great persuader, however, it would seem that being a Lefebvre was what really stopped him. The family, during the nineteenth century, had given to the Church in France a cardinal, a bishop, a score of priests, monks and nuns. The Church-as-Institution was the family's whole life, something which worked for Marcel in contradictory ways. Watching the revolution tear down the edifice drove him to rebell in its defense, whereas breaking a lifelong pledge of obedience to ecclesiastical authority was unthinkable. By the time he had allowed the first consideration to overcome the second, the magic time of a great spontaneous worldwide return to orthodoxy had passed. The revolution stayed in place.

In the years before his death, Pope Paul is known to have wept when he looked on the results of the changes he,

Gasparri, Benedict, Pius and John had spent their lives to bring about. As he contemplated the defection of nuns, priests and laity, he called what had been achieved "auto-destruction". Non-Catholics, on the other hand, may find it hard to realize to what extent the half century of undermining was successful. They see crowds on television applauding the aged Pope and they know that thousands still attend church on Sunday. Indeed, if something like a million Catholics persist in the beliefs, rites and practices the Church held for two thousand years, the number of traditionalists is poor compared to that of the several hundred million who still attend parish churches to hear the *Novus Ordo Missae,* popularly known as "the Mass of Paul VI".

What the outsider sees, however, is a shell, a framework propped up with a proliferating system of dioceses, manned by Vatican-submissive bishops who offer their flocks a variety of earthly commitments couched in the comforting jargon of the sociologist. Typical, the goals expressed by the Episcopal Conference of Chile for their *New Evangelization-1990:* "Solidarity with the poor all over Latin America, insistence on human rights" and dedication to the promotion of what they call a "New Culture" which they describe as "a new way to see, to feel, to reason and to love on a planetary scale, eminently technical and scientific and rich in signs of hope." The program leaves out religion.

If, as has been estimated, Latin Americans will make up fifty percent of Roman Catholics early in the new century, the number left to divide in half may be few indeed. Latin Americans, whether of European, Indian or mixed descent are realists, aware of the fact that they are mortal. While intellectual ecclesiastics of undermined faith may take comfort in

rich hope on a planetary scale, the average Latin American goes to religion to ask how to cope with his own mortality and, if the bishops of Chile and all the other bishops of CELAM have forgotten the answers, he will go to the Protestants, even though that means giving up his Holy Mass, his beloved sacraments and his devotion to the Virgin Mary. In Brazil today there are more Evangelical pastors than Catholic priests and 33% of Guatemalans have joined Fundamentalist sects. Replacing visions of a hypothetical better world with heaven, hell, sin and salvation, any Four Square Gospel preacher south of the border can boast charts on future expansion as optimistic as that of a car salesman in newly united Germany.

Outside Latin America, however, the New Catholic, like the bishops of Chile, have come to terms with the brave new Church that dares to bypass the tough old verities. Bereft of doctrine and most of the practice that marked the Faith, the New Catholic imagines himself willy-nilly on his way to a state of happiness. He cannot help going and he cannot help getting there, if only he loves and stays with the crowd. The trip is taken collectively. The path is called "history" and time is called "change". Both history and change are inevitable. They happen to man. Pope Paul used to say, "The great hope for the human advancement we are seeking lies in the successive changes inherent in history" and for the former Father General of the Jesuits, Pedro Arrupe, the important thing was, "ongoing change, that dizzy process of transformation to which everything is subjected".

Thus subjected, the New Catholic evolves according to what he is told is "God's plan", becoming as he does, "ever more human". He is convinced that difficulties, even the chaos of inner cities, can be dissolved in love. As for his coming

state of happiness, signals are confusing. It could be that better world which John Paul II calls "a civilization of love". It could be the classic Jewish "coming of the Messiah", a favorite with many advanced theologians, or it could even be old-fashioned Heaven. The New Catholic is characterized by a strenuous optimism and remarkable tractability.

Not so the devotees of tradition. As if part of another world, they consider themselves members of the Church Militant. For them life is real, life is earnest and each life is a separate thing. Involved is not Mankind but Everyman and the medieval drama sets the pace. Each man is a protagonist, free to do right and free to do wrong. He causes change, he molds history and he knows he will be called to account for everything he does.

The two concepts are diametrically opposed, so that the New and the Old Catholic have become virtual strangers to each other. The rift is big and the present polemics about rites, language, priestly training and even papal authority are the results, not the causes of a difference which is about something intrinsic and much more grave. Six decades of dedicated undermining have given way to four decades of crisis, but the story goes back much further. It was with a striking flash of historical intuition that the Mexican President, Emilio Portes Gil, told his companions at that banquet in the summer of 1929: "The struggle is not new. It has been going on for twenty centuries and it will continue until the end of time."

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# *Postscript*

Though this was written for the **3rd** Edition of this book, it pertains equally as well to the **4th** Edition

This third and definitive edition of a book that appeared seven years ago comes as a supplement rather than a bringing up to date. Nothing has really changed, only gone on. All of the second edition is here and the thousands of new words support the original thesis.

As researcher, author, designer and publisher, I sent the English version to readers in twenty-six countries. The *Anton Schmid Verlag* in Bavaria came out with a handsome German edition, while the major Mexican publisher, *Edamex*, sponsored a gala presentation of the Spanish translation, complete with TV, a bevy of reporters, champagne and caviar, only to have their product suppressed by the 120-man Mexican episcopate. Still pending, an Italian and a French edition, the latter all set up in Paris in 1992 with a Sorbonne professor whose project was quashed by the Pius X Society, brave occupiers of St. Nicolas-du-Chardonnet, apparently because Msgr. Lefebvre does not emerge from these pages as the completely successful rescuer of the Church.

While I hear little from the German publishers, the hard work of self-publishing brings the great reward of direct reader contact. From the many hundreds of letters and notes received, it is clear that nobody takes the book calmly. Comments range from Malachi Martin's "in comparison, the rest being published today is far off the mark" to Michael Davies: "it's mainly malicious gossip". However, nearly all who have written express gratitude for clarification of a tragedy that has baffled them for years.

As for protest, it has usually come from a layman in some kind of leader position who is known for his or her publicly stated analysis based on information available a quarter of a century ago. Rather than welcome further research, they see this book as a challenge to their thesis, usually the Pope-John's-Council myth which, over the years, has cemented into a kind of dogma. At a loss for

arguments against facts they never knew, they take refuge in the cry, "no footnotes!"

Quite true. No editor of hundreds of newspaper and magazine articles ever asked me for a footnote. I'm not sure I would know how to write one. Colleague Davies does, but then he was raised to be a school teacher and I was trained as a pianist. When I began to write, I found that a reporter has to be more careful than a scholar about his facts, because an editor who is hurt by a misstatement will fire the reporter.

Some twenty years ago in Rome I confronted the valiant founder of *Si, Si, No, No*, Fr. Francesco Putti, with the objection, "But Father, you don't say where you get your information. You don't give your sources." And I remember his forthright reply, "No, I don't. But I will tell you that everything I print is documented. Take the case of Cardinal Garrone whom I consider to be the greatest destroyer of the Church today. He has ruined the whole field of Catholic education, abolished the Catechism, emptied the seminaries. I write these things but I do not call him a Mason. If tomorrow you bring me proof that he is a Mason, I will print it, but not before."

In numbered small print at the bottom of a page an author admits that he took information from another writer. In a long article published recently in Milan, my son cites a reference after nearly every sentence. The subject? Jerusalem. Michael has never been in Jerusalem.

But I lived this book! Unforgettable, those pilgrimages to St. Peter's, the hundreds of press conferences, once sitting next to Henri Fesquet of Paris' *Le Monde* who told me the man who brought Karol Wojtyla to the attention of Rome and sponsored his rise to the papacy was Cardinal Garrone. In 15 years there were synods, symposia, conclaves and papal funerals. There were daily bulletins from the Vatican press office and from Vatican Radio with such tragic gems as Paul VI's "think of it, 271 Christian Churches!" There were the vivid, very Church-conscious Italian dailies and by telephone I could contact Traditionalists all over Europe.

Being in Rome the morning John Paul I was found dead gives this book authenticity beyond that of the best-sellers of *Yallop and Caldwell* who wrote six and ten years after the event. Alerted by a call from Gary Giuffré in Texas only an hour after the body was found, I rushed down to the Vatican press rooms where scores of reporters had already gathered. Day after day I stayed close to the scene for press conferences, press releases, the funeral in the rain, those interviews in the local papers, and, already ten years a resident of Rome, 1 was in touch by telephone with important contacts. If prize-winner Mary McCrory had asked a few perceptive questions as we walked the length of Via dells Conciliazone that afternoon, she could have avoided the awful mistakes I accuse her of on pages 140 and 141.

"Smacking of gossip" somebody wrote, concerning the lines about Nuncio Roncalli on page 125. Not gossip but truth received from Major René Rouchette, one-time Presidential Guard, now editor of the excellent review, *Sous la Banniere***.** He met my Rome train at the Lyon station and, as we drove to Raveau for the consecration of Fr. Robert McKenna to the episcopate, he told me of the shock felt by the young officers as they followed the Nuncio's course on those Thursday evenings.

Smacking even more of gossip, but just as factual as the Rouchette experience, three items not mentioned in the book but worth relating: **(1)** Cardinal Ottaviani had nothing to do with the writing of his so-called "intervention"; the author was a beautiful Italian woman. **(2)** Fr Kolbe was no Pole but what the Nazis called a *Reichsdeutscher* (100% German) and he was arrested for underground political activity in Poland. **(3)** John Wright was an orphan, adopted, educated and moved into the hierarchy by a certain Pennsylvania Lodge of Freemasons. "Footnotes" by telephone only! (52 5 535.4941)

Several readers ask why, if I am a "*sedevacantist*", I use the title "pope" with the names of recent pontiffs. My answer is, the idea that the See of Peter is vacant is a theological concept and, as an historian, 1 am obliged to call the man firmly planted in the Vatican the way the world calls him. In any case it should be quite clear that for many decades I have known the Church to be under Enemy (that is, under Judeo-Masonic) Occupation. It was in 1940 that our *Classics* professor and family dinner guest, just back from a summer among the Roman ruins,, reported dismay on the part of Italian authorities at the recent election of Eugenio Pacelli, the only papabile whose family was of Jewish origin.

How far the judaizing of Catholicism had been accepted at top level by the end of the 1970's, I was to learn quite unexpectedly one afternoon in Rome. Scanning the list of new books at the library of SIDIC, an information center sponsored jointly by the American Jewish Committee and the Vatican Secretariat for Christian Unity, I overheard a lecture going on in an adjacent hall. Slipping through an open door, I sat down among a group of some forty young men, seminarians of the Pontifical Gregorian University. This class, I was to learn, was a part of their regular curriculum. I had already met the speaker, Cornelius Rijk, a Dutch Jew turned Catholic priest and head of SIDIC. I took down his slow, heavily accented English words:

"Some Jews accepted Jesus as the Messiah. Most Jews did not, could not", (the emphasis, his). "Those who could not remained the People of God. Christians are the New People of God. Jesus is the fulfillment of the Prophesies, the Church is not. Therefore we are still living in a time of unfulfillment.

"Jews and Christians (he never used the word "Catholic" nor the word "Christ") have a common past and a common future, but just now they have a certain tension because, while the Jews know the Messiah is not yet, Christians say the Messiah has come."

Incredibly, under this barrage of blasphemy, not one of the elite candidates for priesthood, and probably for hierarchy, even murmured. Onward, the ungodly lesson:

"But are we Christians not too narrow in our interpretation of

the word "*Messiah*"? After all, what does it mean? An anointed one, a king then, like King David. The Jewish idea of the word *Messiah* is much more realistic. Like the idea of Redemption. Don't we spiritualize it too much? Liberation is Redemption; the Jews liberated from the Nazis, that is Redemption. We Christians need more dialogue with the Jews so that they can help us to more realism..."

While the Jesuit Gregorian produces Christo-Jews and Jesuit Louvain, Christo-Marxists, in India it's Christo-Hindus. A reader writes from New Delhi: "At the Jesuit seminary here, students are asked to sit and meditate in front of a large painting of the many-headed snake called *Ananthasyanam* on which the god Vishnu reclines".

Enemy Occupation. Otherwise how could Rome, as *Anno Domini* 2000 approaches, pile false charge on false charge against twenty centuries of Catholicism? What but the deep-rooted antagonism of an enemy could ask us to beg forgiveness of Islam for the Crusades and the Reconquest of Spain, of Protestants for the Counter-Reformation, of the Socialist International for rescuing Spain from Bolschevism, of the Jews for the Shoah and of women for who knows what? Fittingly, the Occupiers are setting up an Old Testament Jubilee - that "trumpet call to repentence!"

Repent, yes, each of our sins. However, this collective plea for pardon has nothing to do with our sins. Rather, it fabricates an un-Catholic historical agenda, then proceeds to bash the Church for not having observed it.

There is another translation of the root-word *jubilare* and that is, "to shout for joy". Let us who hold to the Faith shout praise, honor and thanks as we look back to what was Christian Civilization. Let us shout our homage to its saints, its martyrs, its legions of holy priests, monks and nuns, to its missionaries, good popes, kings and queens, its teachers, warriors, explorers, artists and builders. In the turmoil and deprivation of our time, to remember a world permeated with the sanctifying grace of the true Mass and Sacraments must move us to counter incrimination with celebration!

Ahead now? While years of close observation give no authority, they give perspective and on that basis I make the plea that Traditional Catholics change course. Let us leave to God the choice of a true pope. The several pathetic attempts to hold conclaves have come to nothing. There is, however, a task of tremendous urgency before us as One World-New Age darkness closes in and that is to understand and to hold fast to the Doctrine. Once all of us who experienced the Faith before the changes are gone (to the delight of the Occupiers!) while the enemy-controlled communications media increases in effectiveness day by day, what Pius X called "the assent of the intellect to the truth as received" can become intensely challenging and so far from the global norm as to be dangerous. But that will be the burden of true Catholics. That will be the battle ahead.

***Mary Ball Martínez***

Mexico City, August 1998

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### Where the author was present

Rome pilgrimages 1971, 1972, Holy Year... ordinations at Econe 1976, 1978, 1981... the "Charismatics" in St. Peter's... the papal funerals... Assisi's Day of Peace... CELAM at Puebla, Mexico... World Episcopal Synods (five between 1974 and 1985) ... the Jesuit Congregation, etc.

### Interviews, private conversations

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* Since the names of seven popes appear on nearly every page of this book, listing all the page numbers in the *Index* seemed impractical. Their names and **years of elections** are as follows:

**Gregory XVI** ..... Bartolomeo Cappellari ..... **1831**

**Pius IX** ..... Giovanni Mastai-Ferreti ..... **1846**

**Leo XIII** ..... Giocchino Pecci ..... **1878**

**Pius X** ..... Giuseppe Sarto ..... **1903**

**Benedict XV** ..... Giacomo Della Chiesa ..... **1914**

**Pius XI** ..... Achille Ratti ..... **1922**

**Pius XII** ..... Eugenio Pacelli ..... **1939**

**John XIII** ..... Angelo Roncalli ..... **1958**

**Paul VI** ..... Giovanni Battista Montini ..... **1963**

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**John Paul II** ..... Karol Wojtyla ..... **1978**

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